

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

SPIRITUAL DISEASE AND IT'S CURE



IMAM IBNUL QAYYIM AL-JAWZYYAH

Spiritual Disease and Its Cure

**An Adequate Reply to whomsoever asks for
curative medicine for Sins**

**Written by:
Imam Shams-ud-Deen Muhammad
bin Abi Bakr bin Qayyim Al-
Jawziyyah
(Died: 751A.H.)**

Edited by: Shaikh Zakariya ‘Amiraat

Al-Firdous Ltd., London.

Table of Contents

Supplication	11
Relying on the Mercy, Forgiveness and Generosity of Allah ﷻ	33
Self-Deception	48
The difference between (having) a good opinion and being deceived.....	52
Hope.....	53
The harm caused by sins and misdeeds	57
The effect of sins.....	71
Sins produce other sins	74
Sins become a custom.....	75
The sin is the cause for disgrace from Allah ﷻ	76
The misfortunes resulting from sins and wrongdoings.....	77
Sins cause disgrace	78
A sinner comes under the Curse of the Messenger of Allah ﷻ because of his own sins.....	79
Sins deprive the sinner of the benefit of the Prophet's supplication ..	82
The punishments for sins	82
Other effects of sins and misdeeds	86
The Punishments for Sins	89
Sins weaken the heart	93
Sins may lead a person to become forgotten by Allah ﷻ	95
Sins take a person out from the scope of <i>Ihsan</i>	96
Sins deprive a person of the protection of Allah ﷻ	97
Sins weaken the course of the heart towards Allah ﷻ and the Last Day.....	100
Sins hold back the Blessings of Allah ﷻ (to come) and incite His Anger.....	101
Allah ﷻ instils terror and fear in the hearts of sinners	102
Sins draw one's heart away from righteousness.....	103
Sins darken the heart.....	104
Sins disgrace the self.....	105
Sins allow a sinner to become a prisoner of the devil	106
Sins result in losing one's status before Allah ﷻ and before His Creation	107
Sins deny sinners all words or titles of praise and honour.....	109
Sins have the effect of reducing one's intellect	109

Sins lead to severing the tie with Allah ﷻ.....	111
Sins erase all benedictions	112
Sins cast a sinner down to a very low state	115
Sins prevent a sinner from perceiving his/her own benefits	121
Sins support the devils against the sinner.....	125
Sins make the sinner neglect himself.....	132
Legal Islamic punishment.....	139
Punishments of sins are either legislated or divinely decreed by Allah ﷻ.....	140
Punishments which Allah ﷻ has assigned for sins.....	144
The degree of punishment differs according to the type of sin and its effect of corruption	150
Major and minor sins	151
Worshipping Allah ﷻ Alone	155
Types of polytheism	157
Another aspect of polytheism is in worship	160
Polytheism in taking oaths.....	163
The reality of polytheism.....	165
Pride is as great a sin as polytheism	172
A great evil.....	172
Tyranny and Oppression.....	174
The evil consequences of killing	175
The evil consequences of fornication	180
Four ways through which sins may invade a person	181
The unlawfulness of illegal sexual acts	192
The punishment for homosexuality	199
Types of love	220
<i>Al-Khullah</i> (the perfect love in friendship).....	221
Types of love	229
The effects of love	235
Love is the basis of every religion.....	237
The evil consequences of the passionate desire to look at illegal pictures	240
Lut's people (homosexuals).....	244
Lust leads to polytheism	244

Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem

Shaikh, Imam and Scholar, Shams-Deen Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Shaikh Salih Abu Bakr, known as Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, may Allah be pleased with him, was asked:

“What is the opinion of the scholars, may Allah be pleased with them, regarding a man who is afflicted by a disease, and knows that if it should continue, it would damage his life? What is the way to stop this kind of suffering, knowing that the afflicted man has taken all the necessary measures to bring it to an end, yet the pain only increases?”

What is the best way to treat this?

May Allah bless anyone who helps a stricken person, as Allah helps His Servant as long as the Servant helps his brother.

Please give us the legal Islamic opinion on this matter, and may Allah ﷻ reward you, accordingly.”

Shaikh Abu Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, may Allah bless him, replied saying:

“All Praise to Allah ﷻ. It was confirmed in the *Sahih* book of Al-Bukhari, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ has appointed a remedy for every disease He ﷻ has sent down”¹, and in the *Sahih* book of Muslim, on the authority of Jabir bin Abdullah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: “There is a remedy for every malady, and

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Medicine”, (chapter 1), Abu Dawud in the “Book of Medicine”, (chapter 1, 11), and Ibn Maajah in the “Book of Medicine”, (chapter 1).

when the remedy is applied to the disease it is cured with the Permission of Allah, the Exalted and Glorious.”¹

Imam Ahmad reported, on the authority of Usamah bin Shareek, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah has not made a disease without providing a remedy for it, with the exception of one disease, namely old age.”²

This applies to medicines for the heart, soul and body. The Prophet ﷺ considered ignorance to be a disease; its medicine is asking scholars.

Abu Dawud reported in his *Sunan*, on the authority of Jabir bin Abdullah ؓ who said: “During a journey, a man among us was hit by a stone, which wounded his head, and he had a wet dream that night. He asked his companions: ‘Can you give permission for me to apply *tayammum* (in my condition)?’ They replied: ‘We cannot find any permission for you, as you may still apply water.’ So the man used water to bathe himself, and died. When we came to the Prophet ﷺ, we informed him, and he ﷺ said: ‘They have killed him, may Allah kill them! Why did they not ask when they did not know? The remedy of ignorance is to ask for the answer. It was enough for him to make *tayammum*, and wrap a damp cloth on his wound, and then clean the rest of his body.’”³

¹ Recorded by Muslim in the book, “*As-Salam*”, (Hadith 69), and the book, “The virtues of the Companions”, (Hadith 92).

² Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Medicine”, (chapter 2), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/377, 413, 443, 453), (3.335), (4/278).

³ Recorded by Abu Dawud in “*At-Taharah*”, (purification) (chapter 125).

Allah ﷻ has informed us that the Qur'an is a healing, when He ﷻ said: **«If We had sent this as a Qur'an in a foreign language (other than Arabic), they would have said: "Why are not its Verses explained in detail (in our language)? What! (A Book) not in Arabic and (the Messenger) an Arab?" Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing.»**¹ and He ﷻ also said: **«We sent down of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe»**¹; the whole of the Qur'an is a healing; it is a healing for hearts from ignorance, doubt and uncertainty. Allah ﷻ has not sent down a more comprehensive and beneficial medicine to remove any ailment than the Qur'an.

It was reported in the *Sahih* book of Al-Bukhari, on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri ؓ who said: "A group of the companions of the Messenger of Allah proceeded on a journey till they dismounted near one of the Arab tribes and requested them to entertain them as their guests, but they (the tribe people) refused to entertain them. Then the chief of that tribe was bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and he was given all sorts of treatment, but all in vain. Some of them said: 'Will you go to the group (those travellers) who have dismounted near you and see if one of them has something useful?' They came to them and said: 'O group! Our leader has been bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and we have treated him with everything, but nothing has benefited him. Has anyone of you anything useful?' One of them replied: 'Yes, by Allah, I know how to treat it with a *Ruqya*. But, by Allah, we wanted you to receive us as your guests but you refused. I will not treat

¹ Surat Fussilat, Verse 44.

¹ Surat Al-Isra', Verse 82.

your patient with a *Ruqya* till you fix for us something a wage.’ Consequently, they agreed to give those travellers a flock of sheep. The man went with them (the people of the tribe) and started spitting (on the bite) and reciting Surat-al-Fatihah till the patient was healed and started walking as if he had never been sick. When the tribe people paid them their wages that they had agreed upon, some of them (the Prophet’s Companions) said: ‘Distribute (the sheep).’ But the one who treated with the *Ruqya* said: ‘Do not do that till we have gone to the Messenger of Allah and told him what has happened, and then see what he will order us to do.’ So they approached the Messenger of Allah and mentioned the story to him, to which he said: ‘How do you know that Surat Al-Fatihah is a *Ruqya*? You have done the right thing! Divide (what you have got) and assign for me a share with you.’”²

If a person uses the healing with Al-Fatihah perfectly, he would see some great effects in the process of healing.

I stayed in Makkah for a period where I was stricken with some diseases, but was unable to find a doctor or a handy medicine, so I was simply treating myself with Al-Fatihah, and witnessed some astonishing effects. I offered this treatment to anyone who suffered any pain, and most of them were cured within a short period of time.

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Medicine”, (chapter 33, 39), the book, “Rewards”, (chapter 16, Muslim in the book, “As-Salam”, (Hadith 66), Abu Dawud in the “Book of Selling”, (chapter 37), At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Medicine”, (chapter 20) and Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 10, 44).

However, one should understand that the supplications and the Verses which are used for the healing process require that the person should have belief and readiness to be cured by this treatment, in order for it to have a greater effect upon him/her. In fact, if healing is not achieved, it could have been due to the weak effect of the medicine, the non-readiness of the afflicted one, or to a powerful preventive factor which hindered the treatment by material medicines. Such lack of effect could also be the result of a natural negative reaction towards the medicine; indeed, if one's body wholly accepts the medicine, it would benefit accordingly; and likewise if the heart accepts healing by the Qur'an and supplications, in a comprehensive manner, the person who performing this treatment would more effectively be able to remove the ailment (with Allah's Permission).

Supplication is one of the most powerful tools for driving away evil, and obtaining that which is needed; however, its effect may be absent if there is weakness in the self – such that the supplication could be disliked by Allah ﷻ; if it includes any injustice, or due to the weakness of one's heart, not being devoted to Allah ﷻ at the time of supplication. Hindrance may also be due to eating that which is *Haram* (unlawful in Islam) or to the accumulation of sins on the heart, or to the dominance of one's desires upon the self. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Supplicate to Allah when you are assured of being answered, and know that Allah does not answer a supplication which comes from a careless and inattentive heart."¹

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the "Book of Supplications", (chapter 65) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/451).

One should know that Allah does not accept the supplication coming from a distracted heart. The supplication is a good and beneficial cure for one's ailment, but indifference or carelessness of the heart, from Allah ﷻ, cancels its effect, just as weakness is caused by the consummation of Haram things. Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "O people, Allah is Good and He, therefore, accepts only that which is good. And Allah commanded the believers as He commanded the Messengers by saying: **﴿O Messengers, eat of the good things, and do good deeds; verily I am aware of what you do﴾** (Al-Mu'minun: 51) And He ﷻ said: **﴿O those who believe, eat of the good things that We gave you﴾** (Al-Baqarah: 172)." He ؓ then made a mention of a person who travels widely, his hair dishevelled and covered with dust. He lifts his hand towards the sky (and thus makes the supplication): "O Lord, O Lord," whereas his diet is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, and his clothes are unlawful, and his nourishment is unlawful. How then could his supplication be accepted?"²

Abdullah bin Imam Ahmad reported in the book, *Zuhd*, about his father: "The Children of Israel suffered an affliction, so Allah ﷻ revealed to their Prophet to inform them: 'You go out to the desert in your filthy bodies, and you invoke my blessings, raising your hands, with which you have killed people and brought unlawful goods into your houses. Now that My Punishment has increased upon you, you will just stay more distant from Me.'"

² Recorded by Muslim in the "Book of Zakat", (Hadith 64), At-Timridhi in the book, "*Tafsir Surat Al-Baqarah*", (chapter 26), Darami in the book, "*Ar-Riqaq*", (chapter 9), and Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 328).

Supplication

Supplication is one of the most beneficial cures. It is the enemy of affliction, challenging and treating it, by preventing it from occurring; it removes it or weakens it if it falls upon a believer. It is the weapon of every believer, as reported by Al-Hakim in his *Sahih* book, on the authority of Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Supplication is the weapon of a believer; it is the pillar of Islam, and the light of the heavens and earth.”

There are three situations in relation to this affliction or trial: First, when it is more powerful than the affliction so it drives it away.

Second, when it is weaker than the affliction, however it reduces its effect.

Third, when they resist each other and so each one prevents the other from being effective.

Abu Khizamah said: “I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, do the incantations that we invoke, the medicine that we apply, and the preventative measures that we observe avert, in any way, the Decree of Allah?’ He ﷺ replied: ‘That is also a part of the Decree of Allah (al-Qadr)’.”¹

Thawban ؓ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Only supplication averts the decree, only kindness prolongs life, and a man is deprived of provision for a fault he commits.”²

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi, Ahmad and Ibn Maajah.

² Recorded by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah.

Supplicating earnestly

This is one of the most beneficial medicines.

Ibn Maajah reported in his *Sunan*, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah ؓ who said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'He who does not ask Allah, earns His Anger.'"³

Al-Hakim reported in his *Sahih* book, on the authority of Anas ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Do not under-estimate supplication, for no one perishes with it."

Al-Awza'i reported from az-Zuhari, from 'Urwah, from Aishah ؓ who said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Allah ﷻ loves those who persist in supplicating to Him.'"

In the book, *Zuhd*, by Imam Ahmad, on the authority of Abu Qatadah who said: "Muwariq said: 'I could not find a better example of a believer but that of a man clinging to a piece of wood at sea, praying: 'O Lord... O Lord...' asking Allah ﷻ to save him.'"

Impediments which prevent the beneficial effects of supplication

Among the impediments which prevent the effect of supplication from taking place are:

The feeling of hastiness in a person who considers the supplication to be slow to take effect, so he becomes distressed and abandons it. Such person is like one who plants some seeds and looks after them by watering them regularly, but if they grow slowly, he ignores them.

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the "Book of Supplications", (chapter 24) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/442).

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Everyone's supplication will be answered, as long as one is not hasty, and says: 'I made my supplication but it was not answered.'"¹

The Prophet ﷺ also said: "Whenever a Muslim supplicates to Allah, Allah grants him his supplication or averts some kind of evil from him, so long as he does not supplicate for something sinful or something that would cut off the ties of kinship." Thereupon someone said: "Then we shall supplicate plenty." The Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah is more plentiful in responding."²

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Any Muslim who makes a supplication, containing nothing which is sinful or which involves breaking ties of relationship, will be receive one of three things by Allah: He will give him a swift answer, or store it up for him in the next world, or remove from him an equivalent amount of evil.' Those who heard it said they would then make many supplications, so he ﷺ replied that Allah ﷻ was more ready to answer than they were to ask."³

Presence of the heart at the time of supplication

One's presence of heart should accompany a supplication for any request, and it is also more effective if it coincides with one of the six "times of reply" (times when a supplication is more likely to be responded to): the last third of the night,

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the "Book of Supplications", (chapter 12).

² Recorded by At-Tirmidhi, on the authority of 'Ubadah bin as-Samit رضي الله عنه.

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi(2257).

during the Adhan (Call to Salaah), between the Adhan and Iqamah, before the prescribed Salaah, when the Imam stands on the Minbar (pulpit) on Friday until the termination of Salaah on that day, and the last hour after 'Asr (afternoon Salaah). One should fear Allah inside one's heart, with total submission to Him ﷻ, facing the Qiblah⁴ in a state of purity (after having performed ablution). Then one should raise one's hands to the Lord, starting by praising Him, invoking His Mercy upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, requesting His Forgiveness and the acceptance of one's repentance. Then, this is followed by relentlessly asking the Lord to help you in a particular matter, remembering Him by all His Names and Attributes, and affirming one's firm belief in Islamic Monotheism; namely those supplications which include the Great Name of Allah ﷻ. Such was mentioned in the Hadith of Abdullah bin Buraydah, on the authority of his father, who said that the Prophet ﷺ heard a man saying: "O Allah, I ask You that I testify that You are Allah and there is no god but You, the One, the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, Who begets not, nor was he begotten, and there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him," to which he ﷺ replied: "He has asked Allah with the Name, which if used to ask Allah for something, He ﷻ gives, and if used to supplicate Allah for something, He ﷻ responds". In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ was reported as saying: "You have asked Allah ﷻ with His Great Name."⁵

Asma', daughter of Yazid repored that the Prophet ﷺ said: "The Greatest Name of Allah is in these two Verses **﴿Your**

⁴ The direction which Muslims face when standing for *Salat* (prayer).

⁵ Recorded by An-Nassai in his book, "*As-Sahow*", (chapter 58), At-Tirmidhi in the "Book of Supplications", (chapter 63, 93), Darami in the "Book of *Jihad*", (chapter 6).

***ilah* (god) is one *ilah* (Allah), (*la ilaha illa huwa*) none who has the right to be worshipped but He, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful)¹ and (Allah! (*la ilaha illa huwa*) none who has the right to be worshipped but He. *Al-Hayyu-l-Qayyum* (the Ever Living, the One who sustains and protects all that exists))². At-Tirmidhi said: "This is an authentic Hadith."**

There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad and the *Sahih* book of Al-Hakim, a Hadith reported by Abu Hurayrah, Anas bin Malik and Rabee'ah bin 'Amir ؓ, that the Prophet ﷺ said: "observe supplicating to Allah ﷻ with the expression: *Dhal-Jalal wal-Ikram* (Owner of Majesty and Honour)"³, meaning: adhere to this, supplicating to Allah constantly, using this expression.

At-Tirmidhi also recorded a Hadith of Abu Hurayrah ؓ that when the Prophet ﷺ was concerned about a particular matter, he would raise his hands to the sky, and if he persisted in his supplication, he would say: "*Ya Hayy, Ya Qayyum!*" (The Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists).

Anas bin Malik ؓ also said: "When the Prophet ﷺ was anxious about a particular matter, he ﷺ would say: '*Ya Hayy, Ya Qayyum*, with Your Mercy I seek Your Help."

In the *Sahih* of Al-Hakim, Abu Umamah ؓ was reported as saying: "The Prophet ﷺ said: 'The Greatest Name of Allah is

¹ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 163.

² Surat Al-'Imran, Verse 1.

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the "Book of Supplications", (chapter 90) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/177).

mentioned in three Surats of the Qur'an: Al-Baqarah, Al-'Imran and Ta-Ha." Al-Qasim said: "I Searched, and found that it is *(Al-Hayy, Al-Qayyum)*."

Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas ؓ was recorded, in the Sunan of At-Tirmidhi and the *Sahih* book of Al-Hakim, as reporting that the Prophet ﷺ said: "(As for) The Supplication of Dhun-Nun (Jonah), when he invoked Allah ﷻ through the darkness, inside the big fish: **None has the right to be worshipped but You (O Allah), Glorified are You! Truly, I have been of the wrongdoers**) no Muslim invoked Allah ﷻ with this Supplication except that Allah ﷻ responds to him"⁴. At-Tirmidhi said: "This Hadith is authentic."

In another narration recorded by Al-Hakim in Al-Mustadrak, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Shall I inform you of a supplication that if anyone among you is in trouble should invoke Allah ﷻ with it? It is the supplication of Dhun-Nun (Jonah)."

Sa'id also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Shall I guide you to the Greatest Name of Allah ﷻ? The supplication of Dhun-Nun. A man said: 'O Messenger of Allah, was there an exception for Dhun-Nun? He ﷺ said: "Don't you hear Allah ﷻ saying **(So We answered his call, and delivered him from the distress, and thus We do deliver the believers)**"⁵, therefore, if any stricken Muslim uses this supplication forty times during his sickness but (then) died (in his illness) he would be given the reward of a martyr, yet if he should be cured, his sins would be forgiven."

⁴ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the "Book of Supplications", chapter 81.

⁵ Surat Al-Anbiya', Verse 88.

Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ used to say, in times of trouble: “There is no god but Allah, the Mighty, and the Most Forbearing. There is no god but the Lord of the Mighty Throne. There is no god but Allah, the Lord of the Seven Heavens, the Lord of the Earth, and the Lord of the Mighty Throne.”

In the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad, Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught me to say, in times of distress: ‘There is no god but Allah, the Most Forbearing, the Most Generous. Glorified is Allah, the Lord of the Mighty Throne. All Praise to Allah, the Lord of ‘*Alamin* (mankind, *Jinn* and all that exists).’¹

Abdullah bin Mas’ud ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When a person is in distress, and says: ‘O Allah, I am Your Servant, son of Your Servant, son of Your Maidservant, my forelock is in Your Hand, Your Command over me is forever executed and Your Decree over me is just. I ask You, by every name belonging to You with which You named Yourself, or revealed in Your Book, or You taught to any of Your creation, or you have preserved in the knowledge of the Unseen with You, that You make the Qur’an the life of my heart, the light of my breast, an end to my sorrow(s), and a release for my anxiety’, Allah ﷻ will release him from all his worries, and replace them with happiness, instead.” They replied: ‘Shall we learn them?’ He ﷺ said: ‘Everyone who hears this should learn it.’²

¹ Recorded by Ahmad (1/ 91, 94).

² Recorded by Ahmad (1/ 391, 452), (3/38).

Ibn Mas'ud said: "No prophet endured a distress except that he sought the Help of Allah, by glorifying him (with *tasbeeh*)."

The connection of stress with supplication

Often, we may find that certain supplications used by some people, may be answered. These supplications were usually made at times of stress or plight which lead a person to turn to Allah with sincerity; or in connection with a past good deed which Allah ﷻ accepted and then thanked him for by answering his supplication; or if it coincided with a time of response to supplications. The person would think that the secret behind the answer to his supplication (from Allah ﷻ) is simply the utterance of that supplication, without relating it to those issues which might have been connected to it.

Supplicating and seeking refuge with Allah ﷻ is like a (defensive) weapon

If a weapon is complete, the effect would be powerful, and there would be no obstacle ahead of one, so the destruction of the enemy could be accomplished. However, if one of those aspects was missing, then the weapon would be less effective.

If the supplication is not practical itself, or if the person making the supplication has not linked his heart to his tongue, or if an impediment blocks the response (of Allah ﷻ) to the supplication, then no effect would be seen to occur.

Supplication and the delay of causes of effect

There is a popular question about supplication, which is related to fate and destiny: "It is likely that a request in a supplication may already have been preordained not to take

place, whether a person makes the supplication or not, and if it had not been preordained at all, it would not take place anyway”

Those who thought that this statement was valid, would abstain from making supplication, saying that it is of no use!

Those people who believe in this statement are contradicting themselves, because their belief suggests the cancelling of all causes of effect. We tell them:

“If satiation and quenching were preordained for you, then it would be necessary that they should take place, whether you eat or not. However, if they were not preordained, then they could not take place whether you eat or not.

If it was preordained for you to have a baby, then you would definitely have a baby, whether you should have sexual intercourse with your wife or not, and if it was not preordained for you to have a baby, it would never take place, therefore, it is not necessary to get married; and so on. But could this be accepted by any reasonable human being? Even an animal naturally relates to the causes of effects, which are the basis of its life. Animals are more reasonable than these people...”

But smart people say: “Observing supplication is pure worship, which attracts the reward of Allah ﷻ, without any effect on the things requested in the supplication!”

Another even smarter group say: “Supplication is but a sign which Allah ﷻ has given to focus on the need of accomplishing something. When Allah ﷻ helps His Servant

to make a supplication, then it is a sign that the Servant's particular need has come to an end."

It is like when one sees dark clouds in the sky; they are a sign that rain may be coming. It has also been said that this is the same as the judgment of obedient acts by their reward, and the judgment of disbelief and disobedient acts with their punishment. They are simply signs of the occurrence of reward or punishment, and they are not causes of the effects. They believe that it is a mere relation with no effect, and therefore, they have contradicted Islam, reason and the first natural order of existence.

The answer to this question is that the decree was already preordained with its causes, and the supplication was one of these causes that was also preordained and free of any further cause.

Whenever a person comes with the cause, the decree will take place. And when a person does not come with the cause, the decree will not occur. Thus, satiation and quenching was predestined together with eating and drinking; having a baby was predestined along with having sexual intercourse; reaping a harvest with farming; taking away the life of an animal with slaughtering it; and likewise, entering Paradise was preordained with doing good deeds, while entering the Hell-Fire was with doing bad deeds.

Therefore, supplication is one of the most effective causes. The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, who were the most learned people in the Islamic *Ummah*, were rightly guided to use this cause in the right manner.

‘Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ used supplication to seek help from Allah ﷻ so as to be victorious over his enemy; it was his greatest weapon. He ؓ used to say to his companions: “You are not supported for victory with your big number; rather you are supported from the heavens.” He used to say: “I do not worry too much about the reply to my supplication. I am only concerned about the supplication itself. If your supplication is sincere, the answer will come with it.”

Whoever is inspired to make a supplication, would receive a reply for his/her need; for Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Ask me for anything, I will respond to your invocation﴾**¹ and **﴿When My Servants ask you concerning Me, then, I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me﴾**²

Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “He who does not ask Allah will earn the anger of Allah”, which shows that pleasing Allah ﷻ lies in both asking Him and obeying him. All good comes from pleasing the Lord, and all hardships and torments come from displeasing Him ﷻ.

Imam Ahmad reported, in his book, “*Zuhd*”, a *Hadith Qudsi* in which Allah ﷻ said: “I am Allah. There is no god but Me. If I am pleased, I bestow My Grace upon My Servant, and there is no limit to My Blessings. If I am Angry, I Curse, and My Curse reaches the seventh offspring of a person.”

¹ Surat Ghafir, Verse 60.

² Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 186.

Texts (from the Qur'an and the Sunnah), man's intellect and *fitrah* (primal nature), and the experiences of nations – despite the diversity of their races and religions – have all proved that seeking the pleasure of the Lord, and being good and dutiful to His Creation is one of the greatest causes of goodness, while its opposite is one of the greatest causes of evil.

Allah ﷻ has determined in His Book (the Qur'an) that the attainment of goodness or evil in this world and the Hereafter, is based upon the nature of one's deeds. It is organised such that the manner a reward is linked to its cause. This arrangement is mentioned in more than a thousand Qur'anic verses; indeed, Islamic judgment is based upon a proper description of this, as in the following Verses: **﴿So when they exceeded the limits of what they were prohibited, We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected"﴾**¹

﴿So when they angered Us, We punished them, and drowned them all﴾²

﴿As for the male thief and the female thief, cut off their hands as a recompense for that which they committed﴾³

﴿Verily, Muslim men and women, believing men and women, obedient men and women, truthful men and women, the men and women who are patient, men and women who are humble, men and women who give

¹ Surat Al-A'raf, Verse 166.

² Surat az-Zukhruf Verse 55.

³ Surat Al-Ma'idah, Verse 38.

sadaqat (charity), men and women who observe fasting, men and women who guard their chastity, and men and women who remember Allah much with their hearts and tongues; Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward»⁴

In other Verses Allah ﷻ, Islamic judgment is shaped both by a condition and a recompense, as in the following Verses:

«If you obey and fear Allah, He will grant you *furqan* (a criterion to judge between right and wrong) and will expiate for you your sins, and forgive you»⁵

«But if they repent and perform *Salat* and give *Zakat*, then they are your brethren in religion»⁶

«If they had believed in Allah, and gone on the Right Way, We would surely have bestowed on them water in abundance»⁷

Overall, the whole Qur'an, from its beginning to its end, clearly explains the notion of recompense for good and evil, and Islamic judgments and commands according to their causes. In fact, all judgments, in this world and the Hereafter; their benefits and their cause of corruptions, are based upon deeds and causes.

Whoever understands and perceives this issue would certainly benefit well in his/her life, and would not rely on destiny, with ignorance or negligence.

⁴ Surat Al-Ahzab, Verse 35

⁵ Surat Al-Anfal, Verse 29.

⁶ Surat at-Taubah, Verse 11.

⁷ Surat al-Jinn, Verse 16.

A divine pre-ordainment is stopped by another divine pre-ordainment, and man cannot escape this fact. Indeed, hunger, thirst and cold and all the other types of worries are part of destiny, yet people endeavour to stop this destiny with other aspects of destiny. And so, whoever is supported and inspired by Allah ﷻ would be able to stop the fate of the punishment in the Hereafter with the divine fore-ordainment of repentance, pure belief and good deeds, which is in conformity with our destiny in this world; because the Lord of the Hereafter and this world is One, and His Wisdom is One, and so none contradicts the other. This represents one of the noblest issues for a person who acknowledges its value and considers it properly.

Nevertheless, there remain two issues which one needs in order to achieve both happiness and success:

First, to know about good and evil, and to have an insight into events taking place in the world; through one's own experiences, news, and the history of ancient and modern nations.

The most beneficial way to do is to ponder on the different meanings of the Qur'an; for it provides such benefit in the most perfect way.

The Verses of the Qur'an contain all the causes of good and evil, in clear detail. There is also the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, which follows the Qur'an and is regarded as the second source of Divine Revelation. Whoever focuses on these alone would find it quite sufficient enough (without checking other sources). They show one good and evil and their sources.

When you contemplate the nations' news and the divine decrees for both people who obey Allah ﷻ and disobey Him, you would realise that it conforms to what you have learnt in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, in every detail of what Allah ﷻ had already informed and promised us about. You would come to learn from the Signs of Allah ﷻ that the Qur'an is true, the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) is true, and that Allah ﷻ in all ways fulfils His Promise. The study of history shows details of the reasons behind good and evil, about which Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ have made this clear for us to understand.

Second, to be cautious not to deceive oneself about these causes, which is one of the most important. In fact, a person may know that a misdeed (and carelessness) is one of the most harmful causes in this world and the Hereafter, but one may be misled by relying upon the Mercy and Forgiveness of Allah ﷻ, or by declaring repentance with one's tongue only, or by arguing that these causes are divine fore-ordainment which human beings cannot challenge or change. Many people believe that whatever sin they commit, it would be removed just by saying: "I seek forgiveness from Allah ﷻ". A man who was concerned with *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) said to me: "I do whatever I do, then I say 'Subhanallah wabi-hamdih' a hundred times, and everything is forgiven, for it was authentically reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever said in a day: 'Subhanallah wabi-hamdih' a hundred times, all his sins will be wiped, even if they were as much as meerschaum (sea-foam)."¹

¹ Recorded by Muslim in the "Book of Invoking Allah", (Hadith 28), Al-Bukhari in the "Book of Supplications", (chapter 65), Abu Dawud in the "Book of *Tasbeeh*", (chapter 24), At-Tirmidhi in the book, "*Al-Witr*" (chapter 15), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 158, 210).

A man from Makkah said to me: “When one of us commits a sin, he would wash and do circumambulation around the Ka’bah for a week, and all his sins would be wiped out.”

Another man said: “It was authentically reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “A man committed a sin and said: ‘O Lord, I have committed a sin. Forgive me.’ So Allah ﷻ forgave him. Then he stood (without committing anything wrong) as Allah wanted, and he again committed another sin. He said: ‘O Lord, I have committed a sin. Forgive me.’ So Allah ﷻ forgave him. Allah ﷻ said: ‘My slave knows that he has a Lord who forgives sins and also punishes for them, so I forgive My slave, and he may do whatever he wants.’”¹ The man said: “And I have no doubt that I have a Lord, Who forgives a sin and also punishes for it”. These type of people have attached themselves to words of hope, and relied on them. When they are reprimanded for indulging in sins and misdeeds, they start quoting everything that they have learnt concerning the Vast Mercy of Allah ﷻ and His Forgiveness. These type of people have uttered some strange statements, such as:

“Seeking infallibility (from sins) shows ignorance of the Vast Mercy of Allah.”

“Abstaining from sins is disrespectful and shows insolence towards the Mercy of Allah.”

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Tawheed*”, (chapter35), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 296, 405, 493).

Muhammad bin Hazm said: "I have witnessed some of those saying in supplication: 'O Allah, I seek refuge in You from infallibility.'"

Some people are deceived by their adherence to the doctrine of *jabr* (predestination and the inescapability of fate); they are fatalists. They claim that man has no control over his actions and has no free will. He is therefore under compulsion to commit sins.

Some of them are deceived by the notion of *Irja'*, a doctrine which defines faith as a state of belief in the heart, without any importance in one's actions (religious obligations). The true definition of Faith is defined by "*Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*" as: the testimony of faith declared by the tongue, the belief in the heart, and actions by the limbs (i.e. one testifies that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, believing in this testimony with his heart, and manifesting this belief in actions, by performing *Salah*, giving *Zakat* and *Sadaqah*, fasting *Ramadan*, performing *Hajj* if one is able, etc)

The Murji'ah (those who adopt the doctrine of *Irja'*) claim that only the testimony of faith is enough to enter Paradise, and so they consider that the faith of the most corrupted person is like the faith of the angels, Jibreel (Gabriel) and Michael ﷺ.

Some people are deceived by their love for the poor, the scholars and pious people. They often visit their graves, seeking their intercession, asking Allah ﷻ for their rights over them...

Some people are deceived into believing that their fathers and ancestors have a special, elevated status in Allah's Sight, and that they could help in securing Allah's Mercy for them. This is witnessed in royal circles, where the closest people to the king/queen always intervene to seek mercy for their relatives, if they were involved in any bad incidents.

Some people are deceived by considering the idea that Allah ﷻ's Punishment would not add anything to His Sovereignty, and His Mercy would not reduce anything from His Kingship. So, these type of people say: I am in need of Allah's Mercy, and Allah ﷻ is the Richest of all. If any destitute person were in need of drinking water from a well, the owner of the well would not deny him so, and Allah ﷻ is the Most Generous of all His Creation. His Forgiveness would not decrease His sovereignty, while His Punishment would not add anything to it.

Some people are deceived by their corrupt understanding of some Verses in the Qur'an. They rely on the Mercy of Allah ﷻ, while wrongly interpreting the Verse: **﴿Verily, Allah forgives all sins﴾**¹. Certainly, polytheism is the basis of all sins, and there is no argument that this Verse is directed to the repentant; for Allah ﷻ forgives the sin of any person who repents from that sin. If the Verse were directed to the non-repentant then all the texts declaring the punishment for sinners would become abrogated. This is due to the lack of knowledge of these people, for Allah ﷻ has used a general expression which conveys that He ﷻ meant repentant people.

¹ Surat az-Zumar, Verse 93.

In Surah an-Nisa', He ﷻ restricted the meaning by saying: **«Verily Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives, except for that, whom He wills.»**² So Allah ﷻ informed that He ﷻ does not forgive associating partners besides Him, but forgives anything else.

Some people are deceived by their wrong interpretation of the Verse: **«O man! What has deluded you in respect of your Noble Lord»**³. They say that Allah ﷻ may grant the argument a deceived person; which is pure ignorance of the meaning of the Qur'an. This Verse considers how man could be deceived by the deceiver (i.e. the Satan) and by the self, which always commands evil.

Some people are deceived by their intention for fasting the day of *Ashura* (the tenth day of *Muharram*) or the day of *Arafah* (the ninth of *Dhul-Hijjah*). Some of them say: fasting the day of *Ashura* expiates for all sins of the year, while fasting the day of *Arafah* is an additional compensation. Such deceived people do not know that performing the five prescribed prayers and fasting the month of *Ramadan* is greater in compensation than fasting the day of *Arafah* and the day of *Ashura*. Fasting the last two days expiates the minor sins committed in between, if major sins have already been avoided.

Fasting the month of *Ramadan* with good faith can expiate minor sins, only if one avoids committing any major sin. Therefore, how could fasting one voluntary day (*Ashura*)

² Surat an-Nisa', Verse 48.

³ Surat Al-Infitar, Verse 2.

expiate for all major sins, committed by a person who did not repent for them? This is undoubtedly impossible, for Allah ﷻ said: **«If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall expiate from you your (small) sins»**⁴.

Some people rely on the *Hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ who reported that Allah ﷻ said: “I am as My Servant thinks good of Me. So he may think of Me whatever he likes.”⁵

This means that whatever was in his thought, Allah would do that to him/her. There is no doubt that good opinion relates to *Ihsan* (perfection in worshipping Allah ﷻ), for the *Muhsin* (the one who exerts perfection in his worship of Allah) has a good opinion of his Lord and believes that He would compensate him for his trying to perfect his worship, and therefore accept his repentance. As for the wrongdoer, who persists in committing sins and infractions, his loneliness in the world of sins and unlawfulness denies him of having a good opinion of His Lord. Al-Hasan Al-Basri ؓ said: “A believer has a good opinion of His Lord, so he perfects his work. A wrongdoer has a poor opinion of his Lord, so he goes about his work in an evil manner.”

Those who have a poor opinion of their Lord are distant from Him ﷻ; they are under His Curse, for they think little of His Commands and Prohibitions.

⁴ Surat an-Nisa', Verse 31.

⁵ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Tawheed*”, (chapter 15, 35), Muslim in the “Book of *Tawbah*”, (Hadith 1), At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, (chapter 51), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 251, 315).

How could such people have good opinion of their Lord when they have shown enmity to His Supporters (the supporters of Allah) and allied with His Enemies?

They deny Allah's Attributes (claiming that He ﷻ does not talk, command, forbid, etc) which He ﷻ has already affirmed to Himself. He ﷻ said about them: **«That thought of yours which you thought about your Lord, has brought you to destruction; and you have become of those utterly lost»**¹; their thinking that Allah ﷻ does not know much about their deeds is their poor opinion of Him ﷻ, which would lead to their destruction.

This is the fate of everyone who denies Allah's Attributes, but describes Him in a different way from what He ﷻ has described Himself.

Reflect on this situation and one's firm need for Allah ﷻ: How could it be that a person's heart is certain of his meeting with His Lord, and that Allah ﷻ hears his words, sees where he is, and knows his secrets, and that he will stand before Him (on the Day of Judgment) to be asked about all his deeds, yet he insists on committing misdeeds, ignoring the Lord's Commands and Prohibitions, and pretends to think of his Lord in a good way. This is simply self-deception and self-delusion.

Abu Umamah Sahl bin Haneef ؓ said: "During the illness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Aishah ؓ had six or seven dinars on him which he ordered her to distribute, but she was kept busy ministering to his suffering. He asked her what had

¹ Surat Fussilat, Verse 23.

happened to the six or seven dinars, and when she replied she had done nothing about them, because she had been kept busy ministering to his suffering, he called for them, and, placing them in his hand, said, "What would Allah's Prophet think if he were to meet Allah, who is Great and Glorious, while possessing these?"²

What will oppressors and great sinners think of Allah ﷻ, when they meet Him with all their acts of injustice?

Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام said to his people: **«Is it a falsehood (gods other than Allah – that you desire? Then what do you think of the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinn, and all that exists)?)»**³ i.e. what do you think He ﷻ would do to you when you meet Him, after having worshipped others besides Him ﷻ?

Whoever ponders well over this matter knows that thinking good of the Lord is the way to perfect one's deeds. Indeed, one commits himself to perfect his actions, because one has a good opinion of one's Lord; that He would accept these and compensate for them, accordingly.

To have a good opinion of the Lord while following one's desires is a sign of inability, as highlighted in the Hadith reported by Shaddad bin Aws ؓ, that the Prophet ﷺ said: "A wise person is one who keeps a watch over his bodily desires and passions, abstaining from that which is harmful, and striving for that which will benefit him after death; while a foolish person is one who subordinates himself to his

² Recorded by At-Tirmidhi and Ahmad.

³ Surat as-Saffat, Verse 86.

cravings and desires, and then expects Allah to fulfil his futile desires.”⁴

Relying on the Mercy, Forgiveness and Generosity of Allah ﷻ

Many ignorant people rely on the Mercy, Forgiveness and Generosity of Allah ﷻ, without following His Commands and Prohibitions, forgetting that He ﷻ is severe in punishment, and that His Wrath will never be withheld from criminal (polytheist, sinning) people. So whoever relies on the Mercy of Allah ﷻ, while still insisting on committing sins is just stubborn.

Ma'ruf has said: “Hoping for mercy from the One (Allah) Whom you do not obey is but foolishness.”

Al-Hasan said: “Some people have been distracted by the hope of Allah’s Grace, until they left this world without having made any repentance. One of them said: ‘Verily, I have a good opinion of My Lord.’ He simply lied, because if he had had a good opinion of his Lord, he would have perfected his deeds.”

Usamah bin Zayd ؓ reported that he heard the Prophet ﷺ say: “A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown in the (Hell) Fire, so that his intestines will come out, and he will go around like a donkey goes around a millstone. The people of the (Hell) Fire will gather around him and say: ‘O so-and-so! What is wrong with you? Didn't you use to

⁴ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Al-Qiyamah*”, (chapter 25), Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, (chapter 31) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 124).

order us to do good deeds and forbid us to do bad deeds?’ He will reply: ‘Yes, I used to order you to do good deeds, but I did not do them myself, and I used to forbid you to do bad deeds, yet I used to do them myself.’”¹

He also reported that Anas bin Malik ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘During my Nocturnal journey (the Night of Isra’) I passed by some people who were having their lips cut by, scissors of fire. I asked: ‘Who are they?’ they said: ‘Lecturers from your Ummah’; they used to enjoin righteousness on people but forgot to practise it themselves.”²

Anas ؓ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “On the night when I was taken up to Heaven I passed by people whose lips were being cut by scissors of fire. I asked Gabriel who they were and he told me they were those preachers among my people, who said what they did not do”³

He ؓ also said: “The Prophet ﷺ often used to say: ‘When I was taken up to heaven I passed by people who had nails of copper and, were scratching their faces and their breasts. I asked: ‘Who are these people, O Gabriel?’ He replied: ‘They are those who were given to back biting and who aspersed people’s honour.’”⁴

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “Creation”, (chapter 10), Muslim in the book, “Az-Zuhd” (Hadith 51), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 205, 206, 209).

² Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 120, 231, 239).

³ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 234) and Abu Dawud in the book, “Al-Adab”, (chapter 35).

⁴ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (6/ 302, 315).

Anas ؓ also said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say quite frequently: ‘O Turner of the heart, keep me steadfast in your religion.’ I said: ‘Messenger of Allah, we do affirm faith in you and in that which you have been sent with, yet despite this, you entertain fear about us.’ Whereupon he ﷺ said: ‘Yes. Verily the hearts are between two of the Fingers of Allah and He turns them as He likes.’”⁵

Anas ؓ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said to Jibreel ؑ: “Why do I never see Michael laughing? He replied: ‘He has never laughed since the Hell-Fire was created.’”⁶

In Sahih Muslim, Anas ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘One (person) from amongst the denizens of Hell, who had led a life of ease and plenty amongst the people of the world, would be made to dip into fire only once on the Day of Resurrection and then it would be said to him: ‘O, son of Adam, did you find any comfort, did you happen to get any material blessing?’ He would reply: ‘By Allah, no, my Lord. And then that person from amongst the persons of the world be brought who had led the most miserable life (in the world) from amongst the inmates of Paradise and he would be made to dip once in Paradise and it would be said to him: ‘O, son of Adam, did you face any hardship? Or had any distress fallen to your lot?’ And he would say: ‘By Allah, no, O my Lord, never did I face any hardship or experience any distress.’”¹

⁵ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (6/ 302, 315).

⁶ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 224).

¹ Recorded by Muslim in the book, “The Hypocrites”, (Hadith 55) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 203, 253).

Al-Bara' bin 'Azib ؓ said: "We went out with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ accompanying the bier of a man of the Ansar. When we reached his grave, it was not yet dug. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sat down and we also sat down around him as if there were birds over our heads. He ﷺ had in his hand a stick with which he was scratching the ground. He then raised his head and said: 'Seek refuge in Allah from the punishment in the grave.' He ﷺ said it twice or thrice. The version of Jabir has the addition: "The dead man hears the thumping of their sandals as the people who attend his funeral go back, and at that moment he is asked: 'O so and so! Who is your Lord, what is your religion, and who is your Prophet?'" Hannad's version says: "Two angels will come to him, make him sit up and ask him: 'Who is your Lord?' He would reply: 'My Lord is Allah.' They will ask him: 'What is your religion?' He would reply: 'My religion is Islam.' They will ask him: 'What is your opinion about the man who was sent on a mission among you?' He would reply: 'He is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ'. They will ask: 'Who made you aware of this?' He would reply: 'I read Allah's Book, believed in it, and considered it true;" which is verified by Allah's ﷻ words: **﴿Allah establishes those who believe with the word that stands firm in this world and the next﴾**. The agreed version reads: "Then a crier will call from Heaven: 'My servant has spoken the truth, so spread a bed for him from Paradise, clothe him from Paradise, and open a door for him into Paradise. So some of its air and perfume will come to him, and a space will be made for him as far as the eye can see.'" He also mentioned the death of an infidel, saying: "His spirit would be restored to his body, two angels would come to him, make him sit up and ask him: 'Who is your Lord?' He would reply: 'Alas, alas! I do not know.' They will ask him: 'What is your

religion?' He would reply: 'Alas, alas! I do not know.' They will ask: 'Who was the man who was sent on a mission among you?' He would reply: 'Alas, alas! I do not know.' Then a crier would call from Heaven: 'He has lied, so spread a bed for him from Hell, clothe him from Hell, and open for him a door into Hell.' Then some of its heat and pestilential wind will come to him, and his grave would become compressed, so that his ribs would be crushed together." Jabir's version adds: "One who is blind and dumb would then be placed in charge of him, having a sledge-hammer such that if a mountain were struck with it, it would become dust. He would give him a blow with it, which would be heard by everything between the east and the west except by men and Jinn, and he would become dust. Then his spirit would be restored to him."²

Al-Bara' ؓ also reported: "As we were in the company of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he saw a group of people, and asked: 'Around what are they gathering?' they said: 'Around a grave which they dig.' The Prophet ﷺ felt anxious, so he rushed until he ﷺ reached that grave, and rested on his knees. I stood facing to see what he ﷺ was going to do. He ﷺ cried until the ground was wet with his tears, then he ﷺ came to us and said: 'Dear brothers, prepare for a day like this.'"³

Buraydah ؓ said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out to us one day and called, three times: 'O people! Do you know my example and your example?' They said: 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He ﷺ said: 'My example and your example is like that of a people who were worried about an

² Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 287, 296) (5/ 136).

³ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", (chapter 19).

invasion from their enemy, so they dispatched someone to look around, and he observed the enemy, he returned to warn them, but was anxious that the enemy might catch up with him before he could warn his people; so he waved his clothing, yelling: O people, Your enemy is coming! O people, your enemy is coming!”¹

Jabir bin Abdullah ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Every intoxicant is forbidden. Verily Allah, the Exalted and Majestic, made a covenant to those who drank intoxicants to make them drink *Tinat al-Khabal*.’ They said: ‘Messenger of Allah, what is *Tinat al-Khabal*?’ He said: ‘It is the sweat of the denizens of Hell’ or ‘the discharge of the denizens of Hell.’”²

Abu Dharr Al-Ghafari ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘I see what you do not see. I hear what you do not hear. The sky has moaned, and it has right to do so. There is no place, the size of four fingers, except that there is an Angel prostrating to Allah on it. Had you known what I know, you would have laughed less and wept much, and you would not even think of satisfying your desire with your women on your beds. Rather, you would climb to the mountains and pray fervently to Allah ﷻ.’” Abu Dharr ؓ then said: “I wish I were a tree, being bitten.”

Hudhayfah ؓ said: “We were attending a funeral with the Prophet ﷺ. When we reached the grave, he ﷺ sat on his legs,

¹ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 348).

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Al-Ahkam*”, (chapter 22), Muslim in the book, “*Al-Ashribah*”, (Hadith 73-75), At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Al-Ashribah*”, (chapter 1, 2), an-Nissai in the book, “*Al-Ashribah*”, (chapter 53), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 274) (4/ 410).

and kept staring at the grave; then he ﷺ said: ‘The believer will feel a pressure which will remove the veins of his testicles, whereas the disbeliever will be filled with fire.’”

Jabir bin Abdullah ؓ said: “We went out with the Prophet ﷺ for the funeral of Sa’d bin Mu’adh, when he died. When the Prophet ﷺ performed the funeral prayer, and Sa’d was placed in his grave, the Prophet ﷺ made *tasbeeh* (Saying Subhanallah!), so we all made *tasbeeh*; he ﷺ said *Allahu Akbar*, and we all said the same. Then it was said to him: ‘Why do you made *tasbeeh*, O Messenger of Allah?’ he ﷺ replied: ‘The grave was getting narrow for this pious Servant of Allah, so I said *takbeer* (Allahu Akbar) until Allah ﷻ relieved him.’”³

Abu Sa’id Al-Khudri ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘When the bier is ready (for its burial) and the people lift it onto their shoulders, then if the deceased is a righteous person he says: ‘Take me ahead,’ but if he is not a righteous one then he says: ‘Woe to it (me)! Where are you taking it (me)?’ And his voice is audible to everything except human beings; for if they heard it they would fall down, unconscious.’”⁴

Abu Umamah ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “On the Day of Resurrection, the sun would draw so close to the people that there would be left only a distance of one mile, and its heat would increase so much that heads would be

³ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 360, 377).

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Funerals”, (chapter 51-53), Muslim in the “Book of Funerals”, (Hadith 50-51), Abu Dawud in the “Book of Funerals”, (chapter 46), an-Nassai in the “Book of Funerals”, (chapter 44), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 240, 280).

boiling. The people would be submerged in perspiration according to their deeds, some up to their knees, some up to the waists and some would have a bridle of perspiration.”⁵

Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “How can I feel happy when Angel Israfil (the angel appointed to blow the Trumpet on the Day of Judgment) has put his lips to the Trumpet, waiting to hear the order to blow the trumpet? This very much distressed his companions, so he told them to seek comfort by reciting: **﴿Sufficient for us is Allah and an excellent Guardian is He﴾**”¹

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The painters of these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection. It will be said to them: ‘Put life in what you have created (i.e. painted).’”²

He ؓ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When anyone of you dies, he would be shown his destination, both in the morning and in the evening, so if he belongs to the people of Paradise, he would be shown his place in Paradise, and if he is from the people of Hell, he would be shown his place in Hell.”³

⁵ Recorded by Muslim in the book, “Paradise”, (Hadith 62), At-Tirmidhi in the book, “The Resurrection”, (chapter 2), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 254, 406).

¹ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/73).

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Tawheed*”, (chapter 56), Muslim in the “Book of Clothing”, (Hadith 96-97) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/4).

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Funerals”, (chapter 90), Muslim in the “Book of Funerals”, (Hadith 65-66), At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Funerals”, (chapter 70) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 16, 51).

He ﷺ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "When the people of Paradise have entered Paradise, and the people of the Fire have entered the Fire, death would be brought and would be placed between the Fire and Paradise, and then it would be slaughtered, and a caller would call out: 'O people of Paradise, no more death! O people of the Fire, no more death!' So, the people of Paradise would have happiness added to their previous happiness, and the people of the Fire would have sorrow added to their previous sorrow."⁴

Abdullah bin Amr ﷺ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "If anyone drinks wine Allah would not accept his prayers for forty days, but if he repents Allah would forgive him. If he repeats the offence Allah would not accept his prayers for forty days, but if he repents Allah would forgive him. Should he further repeat the offence Allah would not accept his prayers for forty days, but if he repents Allah would forgive him. If he repeats it a fourth time Allah would not accept his prayers for forty days, and if he repents Allah would not forgive him, but would let him drink from the river of the fluid flowing from the inhabitants of Hell."⁵

Abu Musa ﷺ said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Mankind will be assembled on the Day of Resurrection in three expositions: the first two will be of arguments and excuses, but in the third, everyone will be handed their book,

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, "*Ar-Riqaq*", (chapter 50), Muslim in the book, "Paradise", (Hadith 40), At-Tirmidhi in the book "Paradise", (chapter 20) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/118) (3/9).

⁵ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/70).

so some will take it with their right hand, and some will take it with their left hand.””⁶

Ibn Mas’ud ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Beware of minor sins, for they gather within a man until they destroy him.””⁷

Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Then a bridge will be laid over the (Hell) Fire. I will be the first to cross it. And the invocation of the Apostles on that Day, will be ‘*Allahumma Sallim, Sallim* (O Allah, save, save (us)!)’ and over that bridge there will be hooks similar to the thorns of As- Sa’dan (a thorny tree). These hooks will snatch the people according to their deeds. Some people will be ruined because of their evil deeds, and some will be cut into pieces and fall down into Hell, but will be saved afterwards, when Allah has finished the judgments among His Servants, and intends to remove from the Fire whoever He wishes to remove, of those who used to testify that none had the right to be worshipped but Allah.

We will order the angels to remove them and the angels will know them by the prostration marks (on their foreheads); for Allah has prevented the Fire from consuming the traces of prostration on the bodies of Adam’s sons. So they will remove them, and by then they would have been burnt (as coal), and then water, called *Ma’ al-Hayat* (water of life)

⁶ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/414), At-Tirmidhi in the book, “The Resurrection”, (chapter 4), and Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, (chapter 33).

⁷ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, (chapter 29), Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Ar-Riqaq*”, (chapter 31), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/402) (5/331).

would be poured on them, and they would spring up like a seedlings springing from the bank of a (rainwater) stream.”¹

Abu Hurayrah ؓ also reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “The first man (whose case) would be decided on the Day of Judgment, would be a man who died as a martyr. He would be brought (before the Judgment Seat). Allah would make him recount His Blessings (i.e. the Blessings which He had bestowed upon him) and he would recount them (and admit having enjoyed them during his life). (Then) Allah will say: ‘What did you do (to requite these Blessings)?’ He would say: ‘I fought for Thee until I died as a martyr.’ Allah will say: ‘You have told a lie! You fought so that you might be called a "brave warrior". And you were called so.’ (Then) orders would be passed against him and he would be dragged, face downward, and cast into Hell. Then there would be brought forward a man who acquired knowledge and imparted it (to others) and recited the Qur'an. He will be brought, Allah will make him recount His Blessings and he would recount them (and admit having enjoyed them during his lifetime). Then Allah will ask: ‘What did you do (to requite these Blessings)?’ He would say: ‘I acquired knowledge and disseminated it and recited the Qur'an, seeking Thy Pleasure.’ Allah will say: ‘You have told a lie! You acquired knowledge so that you might be called “a scholar”, and you recited the Qur'an so that it might be said: “He is a Qari” and such has been said.’ Then orders will be passed against him and he would be dragged, face downward, and cast into the Fire. Then there would be

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Ar-Riqaq*”, (chapter 52), Muslim in the “*Book of Iman*”, (Hadith 299, 304) and Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/23) (2/276).

brought a man whom Allah had made abundantly rich and had granted every kind of wealth. He would be brought, Allah will make him recount His Blessings and he will recount them and (admit having enjoyed them during his lifetime). Allah will (then) ask: 'What have you done (to requite these Blessings)?' He will say: 'I spent money in every cause in which Thou wished that it should be spent.' Allah will say: 'You are lying.' You did (so) that it might be said about (you): "He is a generous fellow", and so it was said. Then will Allah pass orders and he would be dragged, face downward, and thrown into Hell."²

I heard Shaikh Al-Islam, Ibn Taymiyah, saying: "Just as the best of people are the Prophets, the worst of them are those who pretend to be their followers, yet are not. The best people after the Prophets are the scholars, the martyrs, the truthful and sincere. Whereas the most evil people are those who deceive people by pretending to be the followers of the Prophets, while in fact, they are not."

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever among you has unjustly demanded from his brother, in respect to his property or honour, should settle it with him, before he is taken (he dies) while having no dirham or dinar (no money to settle the injustice), so that (on the Day of Resurrection) if he had any good deeds, they would be taken from him and given to the other person, but if he had no good deeds left to settle the matter, the bad deeds of that

² Recorded by Muslim in the book, "*Al-Imarah*", (Hadith 152), and An-Nassai in the book, "*Al-Jihad*", (chapter 22).

person would be added to his, and he would be cast into the Hell-Fire.”¹

Abu Hurayrah ؓ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever usurps the land of somebody unjustly, his neck would be chained down with it down to the seven earths (on the Day of Resurrection).”²

Abu Hurayrah ؓ also reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The fire of the children of Adam which they kindle is a seventieth part of the Fire of Hell.” They said: “Messenger of Allah, this fire is certainly enough.” He ﷺ said: “That Fire is sixty-nine times greater.”³

There are many traditions about this subject, so no one should disregard them, indulging in sins, and remain attached to his good opinion of his Lord!

Abu Al-Wafa' bin 'Uqayl said: “Fear Him (Allah ﷻ) and do not deceive yourself; for a hand may be cut for stealing three dirhams only; flogging can be applied for drinking a small drop of wine; and a woman entered the Hell-Fire because of her mistreatment of a cat.”

Mu'adh ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ instructed me to do ten things, saying: ‘1. Do not associate anything with

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Al-Madhalim*”, (chapter 10), and Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/506).

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “The Beginning of Creation”, (chapter 2), Muslim in the book, “*Al-Musaqat*”, (Hadith 137-139) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 187-190).

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in his book: “Hell”, (chapter 7), *Al-Muwatta'* in his book: “Hell”, (Hadith 1), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 313, 467).

Allah, even if you are killed and burnt on that account. 2. Don't be disobedient to your parents, even if they command you to abandon your family and your property. 3. Do not deliberately neglect to observe a prescribed prayer, for he who neglects the prescribed prayer deliberately will fall away from the Protection of Allah. 4. Do not drink wine, for it is the worst obscenity. 5. Shun evil, for with evil there descends the Wrath of Allah. 6. Beware of running away from the battle-field, even if the people perish. 7. And when death overtakes people (in a plague or disaster) while you are one amongst them, show steadfastness. 8. Spend on your children, according to your means. 9. Do not refrain from using pressure in order to train them. 10. Inculcate in them the fear of Allah"⁴

Imam Ahmad said: "Abu Mu'awiyah reported that Al-A'mash narrated from Salman bin Maysarah, from Tariq bin Shihab, that the Prophet ﷺ said: "A man entered Paradise because of a fly, and another man entered the Hell-Fire because of a fly" The people asked: "Why, O Messenger of Allah?" he ﷺ replied: "Two men passed by a group of people who had an idol they used to worship, however no one could pass through unless they offered something to their idol. The people said to one of them: Offer something to our idol. The man replied: 'I have nothing to offer.' They told him: 'Offer something, even a fly.' So he offered a fly to their god, and they let him go free, but he (later) was to end up in the Hell-Fire. They told the other: 'Offer something.' He replied: 'I would never offer anything except to Allah ﷻ.'

⁴ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, "*Al-Fitan*", (chapter23), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/11)(5/238).

So they struck his neck (executing him), and (consequently) he entered Paradise.”

A careless word uttered by a person could lead him/her to fall into the Hell-Fire, for a longer distance than that between the East and West.

Some deceived people also rely on the fact that Allah ﷻ bestows His Blessings upon them in this world, believing that it is due to His Love for them, and that in the Hereafter, He ﷻ will grant even better blessings. But this is nothing but self-deception.

Imam Ahmad said: “Yahya bin Ghaylan reported that: Rushdayn bin Sa’d narrated, from Harmalah bin ‘Imran at-Tajeeby, from ‘Aqabah bin Muslim, from ‘Aqabah bin ‘Amir, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When you see that Allah ﷻ is granting His Blessings to His Servant, even if the Servant were committing sins, then it is an allurements” then he ﷺ recited: **﴿So, when they forgot (the warning) with which they had been reminded, We opened for them the gates of every (pleasant) thing, until in the midst of their enjoyment in that which they were given, all of a sudden, We took them (in punishment), and they were plunged into destruction, with deep regret and sorrow﴾**¹.”²

A pious scholar once said: “If you see that Allah ﷻ bestows His Blessings upon you, while you are still committing sins, then be cautious of Him; it is just a way to draw you gradually to His Punishment; for He ﷻ said: **﴿Were it not**

¹ Surat Al-An’am, Verse 44.

² Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 145).

that mankind would have become of one community, We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Gracious (Allah), silver roofs for their houses, and elevators whereby they ascend; and for their houses, doors, and thrones on which they could recline; and adornments of gold. Yet all this would have been nothing but enjoyment in this world; but the Hereafter with your Lord is for the pious believers)³ Allah ﷻ has rebuked those who think in this way, saying: (As for man, when his Lord tries him by giving him honour and bounties, then he says: “My Lord has honoured me.” But when He tries him by straitening his means of life, he says: “My Lord has humiliated me! Nay)⁴ i.e. not all those I bestow My Blessings are people I have honoured, and not all those I have straitened their means of life I have humiliated. Rather, I try one with My Blessings, and I honour the other with trials.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Verily, Allah ﷻ gives the world to those whom He ﷻ loves and those whom He does not love, but He ﷻ only give *Iman* (good faith) to those whom He ﷻ loves.”⁵

Self-Deception

The person most deceived is the one who is deluded by this world, preferring it to the Hereafter; seeking the pleasure of this world more than that of the Hereafter, saying: the pleasure of this world is certain, whereas that of the

³ Surat az-Zukhruf, Verses 33-35.

⁴ Surat Al-Fajr, Verses 15-17.

⁵ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi, and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/87).

Hereafter is uncertain, therefore, I shall not leave what is assured and hope for what is doubtful.

This is one of the greatest deceits and enticements of the devil. Even animals have more reason than those deceived people; for an animal would not even attempt to follow a way that would be harmful or damaging to its life.

People who say that they would never leave the assured for the doubtful (as they claim) are either doubtful about the Promise of Allah ﷻ, His Reward, His Punishment and the Truth of His Prophets, or they are certain about it. If you are certain about it, then you are one who does not give much importance to this world, which is due to end soon, but instead prefer to be attached to a world that is more certain and everlasting.

However, if you have any doubt, then you need to review the Verses of the Revelation (in the Qur'an), which prove His Existence, Omnipotence, Will and Oneness. The Verses also give you the evidence about the truthfulness of Allah's Messengers, regarding all the information about Him ﷻ.

Search for the truth with impartiality and you will discover that the Message brought by the Messengers about Allah ﷻ is undoubtedly the truth; that the Creator of this world and the Lord of the heavens and earth is far above His Creation. The inclusive law, to which everything submits, is the Way of Allah ﷻ, the Majestic King, to whom belongs the creation and the authority, so whoever does not relate this Supremacy to Allah ﷻ, has denied Allah ﷻ in terms of His Lordship and Sovereignty.

When a person reflects on his/her condition, as the one whose creation began as a *nutfah* (a zygote or fertilized egg) which developed into a perfect shape of due proportion, it would become clear to him/her that the One Who has cared for him/her in this manner, and carried him/her through these conditions, would neglect or dismiss him/her carelessly, without leaving any commands or prohibitions, knowledge of rights, promises of reward, and warnings of punishment.

If a person ponders thoroughly over this subject, then everything he/she observes and also that which he/she is unable to observe would be seen to him/her as poof of Monotheism (Allah's Oneness, as the One Lord behind this world), for the Prophethood (of Muhammad ﷺ), for the Hereafter, and that the Qur'an is Allah's ﷻ Word.

We have mentioned the evidence of this fact in the book, "The Oaths in the Qur'an", as Allah ﷻ said: **﴿So, I swear by whatsoever you see, and by whatsoever you do not see, this is verily the word of an honoured Messenger﴾**¹, and in the interpretation of the Verse: **﴿also in your own selves. Will you not then see﴾**², as the existence of man is proof of the existence of his Creator, and confirmation of the Creator's Attributes and Perfection.

If one asks: How could a person have a firm belief in (the existence of) the Hereafter, Paradise and Hell, without fulfilling his/her obligations? One should also ask how someone could remember an appointed visit the following day by a king, either to be punished or rewarded, yet spend

¹ Surat Al-Haqqah, Verse 38-40.

² Surat Adh-Dhariyat, Verse 21.

the night without thinking about this meeting with the king, nor preparing for it?

We may say: By Allah, this is a good question which many people ask themselves, because it is strange to see these two conflicting points within a person, for they are due to many reasons:

First, a lack of knowledge and uncertainty, for whoever thinks that one's level of knowledge does not vary in this context has a poor opinion.

Ibrahim عليه السلام asked Allah ﷻ to show him the reviving of the dead, despite the fact that he possessed the full knowledge of the Omnipotence of Allah ﷻ, as he عليه السلام only wanted to strengthen his conviction, by witnessing the event.

Imam Ahmad reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "An informer is unlike a witness."³

People may have flawed knowledge as well as a lack of knowledge, due to influences such as worldly desires, Satan's deception, delaying their promises, having endless hope, being careless, etc.

All this is caused by a lack of patience and insight. Allah ﷻ has commended patient people, who have insight, saying: **﴿We made from among them leaders giving guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and used to believe, with certainty, in Our Signs﴾**¹

³ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/215, 271).

¹ Surat as-Sajdah, Verse 24.

The difference between (having) a good opinion and being deceived

If a good opinion advocates work and action then it is correct, however if it recommends idleness and indulgence in sins, then it is deception.

Good opinion is a wish, so whoever's wish is guiding him to obey Allah ﷻ, and preventing him from committing sins, then it is a sound wish; but whoever's wish is to stay idle, then he is definitely deceived. It is like someone who has good opinion of Allah ﷻ, with a strong wish to achieve the highest level in Paradise, in an eternal Grace, without obeying the Commands of Allah!

Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (for Allah's Religion) and have striven hard in the way of Allah; all these hope for Allah's Mercy﴾**². Look at how Allah ﷻ made their hope based upon obeying Him (believed, emigrated for His Religion, and strived hard).

The deceived people say: "Those who neglect the Rights of Allah (upon His Servants), act unjustly towards other people, and violate His sanctities, are also people who hope for Allah's ﷻ Mercy."

However, having hope and a good opinion of Allah is rather true when they come with the reasons suggested by the Wisdom of Allah ﷻ in His Revelation, Divine Decree, Reward and Generosity. A Servant of Allah ﷻ should fulfil

² Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 218.

his obligations and then have a good opinion of his Lord, imploring the Lord to make them the cause of receiving His Recompense.

Hope

It should be known that whoever hopes for something to happen, is required to take three steps:

First, to love the thing he/she hopes for.

Second, to know that his/her hope could slip away.

Third, to endeavour to obtain this according to his/her ability.

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “He who fears sets out at nightfall, and he who sets out at nightfall reaches the destination. Allah’s commodity is dear. Allah’s commodity is Paradise.”³

Allah ﷻ has placed the characteristics of hope and fear of Him within good doers; therefore, He ﷻ has made beneficial hope and fear related to action, saying: **﴿Verily, those who live in awe of their Lord; and those who believe in the Signs of their Lord; and those who join not anyone as partners with their Lord; and those who give that (their charity) which they give (and also do other good deeds) with their hearts full of fear, because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning); it is these who hasten in good deeds, and they are foremost in them.﴾**⁴

Aishah رضي الله عنها said: “I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about this Verse, and said: ‘Are they the ones who drink wine,

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “The Resurrection”, (chapter 18).

⁴ Surat Al-Mu’minun, Verses 57-61.

fornicate and steal?’ He ﷺ replied: ‘No, O daughter of As-Siddiq (Abu Bakr); they are those who fast, pray and give charity; yet they fear whether their alms and charities have been accepted or not; those who hasten in (doing) good deeds.’¹

Allah ﷻ described blessed people as people who act perfectly, fearing Allah, and described wretched people as those who do misdeeds, disregarding the Punishment of Allah.

When we reflect on the lives of the Companions ﷺ, we discover how they endeavour to act righteously, out of fear and love for Allah ﷻ. Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ﷺ was quoted as saying: “I wish I were a hair in the side of believing servant”² He ﷺ expressed the extent of his fear of Allah, and how he would anything to please his Lord.

He ﷺ used to weep a lot and say: “Cry and if you can’t, try hard to.”

When he ﷺ stood for prayers, he would stand like a piece of wood, out of fear of Allah ﷻ. When he was dying on his bed, he said to Aishah ﷺ: “I have obtained this cover, this milker and this slave from the Muslim treasury; so please take them quickly to Umar bin Al-Khattab. He ﷺ also said: “I wish I were this tree, to be eaten and bitten.”

Abu Qatadah said: “I was told that Abu Bakr ﷺ said: ‘I wish I were herbs to be eaten by animals.’”

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi, and this Hadith was also reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah ﷺ.

² Recorded by Imam Ahmad.

As for Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ, it was said that he was reciting Surat At-Tur, and when he reached the Verse: **﴿Verily, the Torment of your Lord will surely come to pass﴾**, he cried so intensely that he fell ill, and was visited by his Companions.

He ؓ said to his son as he was dying: “Woe unto you! Place my cheek on the ground, in the hope that Allah ﷻ might be merciful to me.”

He ؓ would recite a Verse of the Qur’an and stay indoors for days, receiving people who would come to visit him, because of his excessive fear of Allah; he was extremely mindful of the Punishment of Allah ﷻ; he even had two black lines on his face which marked the lines of his tears.

Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ said to him: “Allah ﷻ has conquered new lands with your hands (to spread Islam)...” But he ؓ replied: “I wish I would be safe, having no reward and no sin in my account.”

Uthman bin ‘Affan ؓ would cry as he stood before a grave, until his beard would become totally wet. He ؓ said: “If I were to stand between Paradise and Hell, not knowing where I would be taken, I would rather choose to be ashes before I should know my final destination.”

Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ used to cry because he feared two things: unfading hope, and following one’s desires. He ؓ said: “Having unfading hope makes one forget the Hereafter, while following one’s desires deviates from the truth. This world is retreating and the Hereafter is coming, so be among the sons of the Hereafter, but do not be among the followers of this world; because today there is action without

reckoning, whereas tomorrow, there is reckoning without (any more) action.”

Abu Darda' ؓ said: “The biggest thing I worry about is that it may be said on the Day of Resurrection: ‘O Abu Darda’, you have received (true Islamic) knowledge, so what have you done in respect to what you have known?’”

He ؓ used to say: “If you knew what you are facing after death, you would not eat your meal nor drink with any appetite ... I wish I were a tree to be bitten and then eaten.”

Abu Dharr ؓ also used to say: “I wish I were a tree being bitten, and I wish that I were never born.” Charitable gifts were presented to him, to which he ؓ said: “We have goats to milk, camels to transport ourselves, a servant to serve us, a duvet to cover ourselves. So, I am worried about being questioned about all these blessings on the Day of Reckoning.”

Tamim ad-Dari ؓ was reciting Surat Al-Jathiyah one night, and when he read the Verse: **﴿Or do those who earn evil deeds think that We shall hold them equal with those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾**, and he kept reciting it and crying all night, until dawn.

Abu ‘Ubaydah ‘Amir bin Al-Jarrah ؓ said: “I wish I were a sheep, slaughtered and eaten by my family. This is a long chapter to follow.”

Al-Bukhari named a chapter in his *Sahih*: “Chapter on: the Fear of a Believer that his Deed may come to Nothing while he is Unaware”

Ibrahim Tamimi said: “Whenever I compare my word to my deed, I fear that I may be wronged.”

I have lived at a time where there thirty Companions of the Prophet ﷺ; they were all worried about hypocrisy, and none of them ever mentioned that the level of his belief was like that Jibreel or Michael ﷺ.

Al-Hasan ؓ said: “Only a believer has fear of Allah, and only a hypocrite feels safe from Allah’s Punishment.”

Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ went to Hudhayfah ؓ, to whom the Prophet ﷺ confided the names of the hypocrites in Al-Madinah, and said to him: “I adjure you, by Allah. Has the Prophet ﷺ named me?” (i.e. among the hypocrites). Hudhayfah ؓ replied: “No, but I will not vindicate anyone else after you.”

I heard that our Shaikh (Ibn Taymiyah) said: “Hudhayfah ؓ did not mean that he would not defend anyone else from hypocrisy, but that he did not want to give others the chance to come and ask him whether they were named by the Prophet ﷺ, in the list of the hypocrites.

The harm caused by sins and misdeeds.

Let us return to the cure of this ailment, which if it continues, would damage our potential in both this world and the Hereafter.

It should be known that sins harm the doer; its harm to the heart is like the effect of poison on the body, according to the degree of the damage done. In fact, all evil and harm that

one faces, in this world and the Hereafter, are caused by one's sins and misdeeds.

What ousted our parents (Adam and Eve ﷺ) from Paradise, the place of pleasure, blessings and delight, to the dwelling of pain, torment and misfortune?

What was the cause for the Satan to be kicked out of heaven, and have his external and internal forms distorted? Allah ﷻ disfigured him to a most horrible shape, and made him possess the most evil intentions. He ﷻ withdrew His Mercy from him and made him live under His Curse. He ﷻ replaced Satan's dwelling from Paradise to Hell, because Satan disobeyed Him ﷻ and turned to polytheism. He was despised in the Sight of Allah ﷻ, because he followed his own desires and rejected the Command of Allah ﷻ, and so earned His Anger.

Who as it who made all the people of the Noah drown until water reached the top of mountains?

Who was it who set the wind on the people of 'Ad and destroyed them, their dwellings and property, until they became an example for other nations until the Day of Resurrection?

Who was it who sent the awful cry to tear the hearts of the disbelievers and destroy them all?

Who was it who lifted the villages of the homosexuals up in the sky, until the Angels heard the barking of their dogs, and then turned them upside down and destroyed them all with

marked stones from the heavens, to give them a punishment not seen by any other nation before?

Who was it who sent upon the people of Shu'aib ؑ punishing clouds like shades, which, once above their heads, rained down a blazing fire upon them?

Who made Pharaoh and his people drown in the sea, and took their spirits to Hell?

Who destroyed Qarun (Korah), his property and family?
Who destroyed all the nations after Noah with different forms of punishments?

Who dispatched slaves, who were given to terrible warfare, to the Children of Israel, entering the very innermost parts of their homes, killing their men, abducting their women and children, burning their properties and plundering their wealth?

Who afflicted the Children of Israel with several different punishments: the destruction of their homes, setting oppressive rulers to them, transforming them into monkeys and pigs, and lastly by vowing: **﴿to keep on sending against them, till the Day of Resurrection, those who would afflict them with a humiliating torment﴾**¹?

Imam Ahmad said: "Al-Waleed bin Muslim reported that: Safwan bin 'Amru narrated (from) Abdu-Rahman bin Jubayr bin Nafeer, who narrated from his father, who said: 'When Cyprus was conquered, families were separated (those who

¹ Surat Al-A'raf, Verse 167.

embraced Islam from those who did not), and left crying due to their separation. I saw Abu Darda' weeping on his own, and asked him: 'O Abu Darda', what makes you cry on a day when Allah ﷻ has made Islam and its people victorious?' He replied: 'Woe unto you, O Jubayr! How worthless are people in the Sight of Allah after they rejected His Command, when once they were a sovereign nation. They turned away from the Command of Allah, so this was their fate.'

Ali bin Al-Ja'd said: "Shu'bah reported to us from Amru bin Murrah who said: "I heard Abu Al-Bukhturi saying: "I was told that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'People would not be destroyed until they (try to) plead their case.'"²

Umm Salamah ؓ said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: 'When sins spread amongst my Ummah, Allah ﷻ will set His Punishment upon them.' I asked: 'O Messenger of Allah! Would there not be among them some pious people, at that time?' He ﷺ replied: 'Yes, there would be.' I said: 'So, what will Allah ﷻ do with such people (the pious ones)?' He ﷺ replied: 'They would suffer the punishment, like the other people, but then they would benefit from the Mercy of Allah.'"³

Al-Hasan ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "This Ummah would stay under the protection of Allah ﷻ, as long as its scholars do not support its leaders, and its pious people do not vindicate the condition of its wrongdoers, and its righteous people do not disregard its evil people. (But) if

² Recorded by Abu Dawud in the "Book of Battles", (chapter 17) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 260) (5/ 293).

³ Recorded by Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* (6/ 295, 304, 418).

they do that, Allah ﷻ will remove His Assistance from them, and set against them oppressive regimes to afflict them with a horrible torment.”

Thawan ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “A man is deprived of a blessing because of a sin he commits.”¹

He ؓ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “People would soon summon one another to attack you, as people do when eating, inviting others to come and share their dish. Someone asked: ‘Would that be because of our small numbers, at that time?’ He replied: ‘No, you will be numerous, at that time: but you would be like the scum and rubbish that is carried down by a torrent, and Allah will remove the fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and placed lasting *wahn* (enervation) into your hearts.’ Someone asked: ‘What is *wahn* (enervation), O Messenger of Allah?’ He ﷺ replied: ‘Love of the world and dislike of death.’”²

Anas bin Malik ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When I was taken back to earth during my Nocturnal Journey, I passed by some people who had nails made of copper, with which they used to scratch their faces and chests. I asked: ‘Who are they, O Jibreel?’ he replied: ‘Those are slanderers who used to report about other people in a libellous manner and disclose their private lives.’”³

¹ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Al-Fitan*”, (chapter 22) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 27, 281, 282).

² Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 359) (5/ 278).

³ Recorded by Abu Dawud in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, (chapter 35) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 234).

Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "In the last days, men would come forth who would use the religion fraudulently, for worldly ends, and wear sheepskins in public to appear meek. Their tongues would be sweeter than sugar, but their hearts would be as the hearts of wolves. Allah will say: 'Are they trying to deceive me, or are they acting presumptuously towards me? I swear, by myself, that I shall send a trial upon those people, which would leave the intelligent man among them confounded.'"⁴

Ibn Abi Dunya reported, on the authority of Ja'far bin Muhammad, (reporting) from his father, (reporting) from his grandfather, who said: "Ali ؓ said: 'There will come a time with people when nothing would be left of Islam, except its name, and (nothing) of the Qur'an, except its caligraphy. Their mosques would be full, but they would be void of right guidance. Their scholars are evil people; a *fitnah* (tribulation) would originate from them, and return to them.'" Sammak bin Harb reported, on the authority of Abdu-Rahman bin Abdullah bin Mas'ud, from his father, who said: "When fornication and usury spread through a country, Allah ﷻ gives the order for its destruction."

Al-Hasan reported in one of his letters: "When people show that they possess knowledge, but waste that action (implementation of that knowledge); and express their love for each other, while their hearts hate each other; and cut their ties of kinship; then they would be subjected to the Curse of Allah, Who will make them deaf and blind (to His Guidance)."

⁴ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", (chapter 60).

Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ said: "I was the tenth (person among) a group of Emigrants who went to see the Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ came to us and said: 'O group of emigrants, there are five attributes from which I seek refuge in Allah that you might attain them: (1) When illegal sexual intercourse spreads openly among people, they would be afflicted with some diseases which were never witnessed by anyone before them. (2) When people cheat in giving short measure (with the scale), they would be afflicted by hardships and be oppressed by their ruler. (3) When people refuse to pay their Zakat, if it were not for the animals, they would be denied rainfall. (4) When people break their promises, Allah will set their enemy upon them. (5) When rulers do not govern with the Laws revealed by Allah, in His Book, Allah will make misery and misfortune prevail among them.'"¹

Amru bin Murrah reported from Salim bin Abi-Al-Ja'd, from Abi Ubaydah bin Abdullah bin Mas'ud, from his father, who said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'The first defect that permeated Banu Israel was when one man (from them) met another man and said: 'O so-and-so, fear Allah, and abandon what you are doing, for it is not lawful for you. But then he met him the following day and (saying) that never prevented him from eating, drinking and sitting with him. So when they did this, Allah mingled their hearts with each other. He ﷺ then recited the Verse: **'(Curses were pronounced on those among the children of Israel who rejected Faith, by the tongue of David and Jesus, the son of Mary, because they disobeyed and were even transgressing beyond bounds)'**. He ﷺ then said: 'By no means, I swear by Allah, you must enjoin what is good and prohibit what is evil;

¹ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, "*Al-Fitan*", (chapter 22).

prevent the (wrong of the) wrongdoer; steer him to conform with what is right, and limit him to what is right.”²

Ibn Abi Dunya reported from Ibrahim bin ‘Amru as-Sana’ani, who said: “Allah ﷻ revealed to Yusa’ bin Nun: ‘I am destroying forty thousand of your best people and sixty thousand of your evil people.’ He replied: ‘O Lord, those are evil people, but why should You destroy the good people?’ He ﷻ said: ‘Because they were never angry, when I was Angry, with those who disobeyed Me, but instead they used to socialise (eat and drink) with them.’”

Abu Umar bin Abdul-Barr reported from Abu ‘Imran, who said: “Allah ﷻ sent two angels to a village with the order to destroy everything therein. The angels found a man praying in a mosque, so they said: ‘O Lord, There is Your Servant so and so, who is praying.’ So Allah ﷻ said: ‘Destroy all the village including him, for his face has never shown any sign of anger for My Sake.’”

Al-Hameedi reported from Sufyan, from ‘Uyaynah, who said: “Sufyan bin Sa’id reported from Mas’ar that an angel was ordered to destroy a village. He said: ‘O Lord, there a worshipper so and so there.’ So Allah ﷻ revealed to the angel: ‘Start with him, for he has never shown any sign of anger for My Sake.’”

Ibn Abi Dunya reported from Wahb bin Munabi, who said: “When Prophet Dawud ﷺ committed a sin, he said: ‘O Lord, Forgive me’ Allah ﷻ said: ‘I forgive you, but I assign

² Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book of “*Tafsir Surat Al-Ma’idah*”, (chapter 6), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/391).

its disgrace upon the Children of Israel.' He replied: 'O Lord, how (could this be possible) while You are the Just Judge, Who never wrongs anyone; I committed the sin yet You assign (disgrace) to others?' So Allah revealed to him: 'When you committed the sin, they never showed their immediate disapproval of your deed.'

Ibn Abi Dunya reported that Anas bin Malik ؓ said: "I went with another man to see Aishah ؓ, and he asked her: 'O Mother of the believers, tell us about the earthquake? She said: 'When they authorize fornication, drinking of wine, the use of musical instruments, Allah ﷻ commands the earth: 'Tremble with them so that they might give up and repent.' Otherwise, He ﷻ would destroy it upon them.' The man asked: 'O Mother of the believers, is it a punishment for them?' She replied: 'Rather it is some advice and mercy for the believers, but a punishment and curse for the disbelievers.' Anas said: 'I have never heard a Hadith, after the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, which made me happier than this Hadith.'

Ibn Abi Dunya reported a *Mursal* Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ: "That the earth trembled during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, so he ﷺ placed his hand on it and said: 'Keep still, for it is not your time yet.' Then he ﷺ turned to his Companions and said: 'Your Lord wants you to please Him, so seek His Pleasure.' When the earth trembled during the leadership of 'Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ, he said: 'O people, this quake would not have taken place unless it was for something that you have innovated (in the matter of religion)! By the One in Whose Hand my soul is, if this quake returns again, I should not live among you in this land.'

Umar bin Abdul-Aziz wrote to all the states in his reign: 'This quake is a censure from Allah ﷻ to His Servants. I have written to all the states to give charity on such a day, in such a month, for Allah ﷻ said: **«Indeed whosoever purifies himself shall achieve success, and remembers the Name of his Lord and prays»**¹. You should say what Adam said: **«Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If you do not forgive us, and do not bestow upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers»**² and you should say what Yunus ؑ (Jonah) said: **«La ilaha illa anta (None has the right to be worshipped but You Allah), Glorified are You! Truly, I have been of the wrongdoers»**³

Imam Ahmad said: "Aswad bin Amir reported from Abu Bakr, from Al-A'mash, from 'Ata' bin Abi Rabah, from Ibn Umar, who said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah say: 'When you enter into an *inah* transaction (interpreted by the scholars as another transaction of usury), hold the tails of oxen, are pleased with agriculture, and give up conducting *jihad* (struggle in the way of Allah). Allah will make disgrace prevail over you, and will not withdraw it until you return to your (original) religion."⁴

Al-Awza'i reported on the authority of Yahya bin Abi Kathir, from Abu Salamah from Abu Hurayrah ؓ who said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'If a sin is discretely committed, it harms none but its owner, but when it is

¹ Surat al-A'la, Verses 14-15.

² Surat Al-A'raf, Verse 23.

³ Surat Al-Anbiya', Verse 87.

⁴ Recorded by Abu Dawud in the "Book of Selling", (chapter 54) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 42, 84).

committed publicly, and is not reprimanded, it would harm everyone.”

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ who said: “States are on the verge of destruction whilst they are populated.” He was asked: ‘How could they be destroyed whilst they are still inhabited?’ He ؓ replied: ‘When its wrongdoers outnumber its righteous people, and its villages are ruled by its hypocrites.”

Al-Awzai reported, on the authority of Hassan bin ‘Atiyyah, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Evil people from my Ummah will rule its righteous people, until a believer will hide himself, exactly in the way a hypocrite hides among us today.”

Ibn Abi Dunya reported, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “There will come a time when the heart of a believer will melt in the way that salt dissolves in water.’ He was asked: ‘What is the reason, O Messenger of Allah?’ He ﷺ replied: ‘Because of (all) the evil deeds (objectionable things) that he sees yet does not change.”

Imam Ahmad reported, on the authority of Jarir, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “(Concerning) any people around whom sins are committed in their society, whilst are they numerous and stronger than those who commit them yet never tried to forbid them (the population) from doing so, Allah would punish all of them.”⁵

Usamah bin Zayd ؓ said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘A man would be brought on the Day of Resurrection,

⁵ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 2, 5, 7, 9) (6/ 304, 333).

and thrown into the Fire. His hunch would be spilled on the Fire, turning like a donkey which turns (a millstone) in a mill. So, the people of Hell would gather around him and ask: 'O, so and so, what is your matter? Were you not enjoining good among us, and forbidding us from doing evil?' He replied: 'Yes, I was, but I used to enjoin good amongst you, yet never did it myself; and I used to forbid you from doing evil, yet did it myself.'"¹

Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "A woman was punished because of a cat she imprisoned until its death, so she entered the Hell-Fire. The woman neither fed nor gave water to the cat, nor (even) let it eat the insects of the land."²

From this perspective, the scholars have said that sins lead to polytheism, just as kissing leads to sexual intercourse, singing leads to fornication, an unlawful look (at a non-*mahram* person) leads to infatuation, and illness leads to death.

Imam Ahmad said: "Al-Waleed reported: 'I heard Al-Awaza'i saying: 'I heard Bilal bin Sa'd saying: 'Do not look at the smallness or insignificance of a sin, but look at the One you have disobeyed.'"

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, "The Beginning of Creation", (chapter 10), Muslim in the book, "Az-Zuhd", (Hadith 51) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 205, 206, 207).

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, "The Beginning of Creation", (chapter 16), Muslim in the book, "The Eclipse", (Hadith 9, 10) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 159, 188).

Allah ﷻ revealed to Musa عليه السلام (Moses): “O Musa, the first who died among My Creation was Iblis (Satan), because he disobeyed Me; for I consider the one who disobeys me among the dead.”

Al-Fudayl bin ‘Ayyad said: “As much as you underestimate a sin, it becomes great in Allah’s Sight, and as much as you consider it great, it becomes small in Allah’s Sight.”

Abu Salih reported, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When a believer sins there is a black spot (placed) on his heart, yet if he repents and asks pardon his heart is polished; but if he does more, it increases till it gains ascendancy over his heart. That is the ‘rust’ mentioned by Allah ﷻ, Most High: **﴿Nay, but on their hearts is the *Raan* (covering of sins and evil deeds)﴾**^{3,4}

Imam Ahmad reported, on the authority of Wahb, who said: “The Lord ﷻ said, in some of His Revelations, to the Children of Israel: ‘When I am obeyed, I am pleased. When I am pleased, I bestow My Blessing and there is no end to it. When I am disobeyed, I am Angry. And when I am Angry (with My Servant), I curse him, and my Curse reaches his seventh child.’”

Abu Nu’aim reported from Salim bin Abi Al-Ja’d, from Abi Darda’, who said: “A man should be careful that the hearts of the believers do not curse him from where he is unaware.’ Then he asked: ‘Do you know the reason why?’ I answered:

³ Surat Al-Mutafifin, Verse 14,

⁴ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, “Az-Zuhd”, (chapter 29) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 297).

‘No.’ He replied: ‘A man continues to commit sins, privately, so Allah ﷻ sets hatred towards that man, in the hearts of believers, from (a direction) where he could not sense.”

Abdullah bin Ahmad reported, in the book, *Az-Zuhd*, that Muhammd bin Sirin felt so apprehensive because of an old debt, so he said: “I know that the cause of this anxiety is a sin which I had committed forty years ago.”

Here we have an important concept regarding sins, which people continue to underestimate: as they do not see the effect of a sin, immediately. Its effect could be delayed, and so people would forget it, and believe that they are not really in the wrong, and therefore do not need to change themselves.

Subhanallah! This misconception has caused so much torment to many people; it deprived them of many blessings, and caused them misfortunes.

This misunderstanding may be found among some scholars, let alone ignorant people!

Imam Ahmad reported, on the authority of Abi Darda ؓ, who said: “Worship Allah as if you could see Him, and know that a little (wealth) which makes you rich is better than much which destroys you. You should know that piety never decays, and that sins are never forgotten.”

The effect of sins

Sins leave disturbing and damaging effects, on the body and soul, which have consequences both in this world and the Hereafter, which Allah ﷻ, Alone, knows.

Some of these effects are:

Deprivation of knowledge: As knowledge is a light that Allah ﷻ places inside the heart of His Servant, however (committing) a sin extinguishes such a light.

Withdrawal of blessings: The Prophet ﷺ said: “A Servant of Allah is denied blessings because of a sin he has committed.” Just as having awe for Allah and being righteous attracts His Blessings, not having awe for Allah leads to poverty.

Loneliness: A sense of isolation, which a sinner feels in his/her heart, towards Allah ﷻ. Yet, this loneliness cannot be compared to all the passion and appetite ones has for this worldly life.

Also there is the alienation one may feel between oneself and others, especially righteous people. When one's isolation intensifies, one is deprived from benefiting from those good people of knowledge, and so one is drawn ever closer to the party of Satan. This isolation may even affect one's relation with one's spouse, children and relatives, as it prevents one from seeing one's true self.

One scholar of the past has said: “When I disobey Allah, I see its effect in the conduct of my wife and my (riding) camel towards me.

Facing hardship: Whenever someone sets out to achieve something, he/she may face mounting difficulties; and this goes to show that whoever obeys Allah ﷻ finds ease in conducting all his/her matters.

Feeling anxiety: One may feel overcome by depression and sadness, because one's sin leads to darkness in one's heart. Indeed, obedience to Allah is light, but disobedience to Allah is darkness. When one's darkness increases, one's confusion intensifies, until one falls blindly into the world of innovation and misguidance, just as a blind person walking alone, at night. This darkness may become deeper and gradually shows up as dullness in the face of a sinner.

Abdullah bin 'Abbas ؓ said: "A good deed brings illumination to the face, light in the heart, power in the body, and love in the people's hearts. A bad deed shows as dullness in the face, darkness in the heart, weakness in the body, shortage of blessings, and hatred in people's hearts."

Prevention from doing other obedient acts: The punishment which comes from a misdeed is that it leads to other misdeeds, thus preventing someone from being obedient, which would attract the Blessings and Grace of Allah ﷻ. It is like a person with food poisoning, deprived of many delicious meals.

The shortening of one's lifespan: Indeed, sins shorten the life of a sinner by denying him/her Allah's Blessings. However, people have differed regarding this matter (the shortening of one's life):

One group say: The shortening of the life of a sinner is the removal of the blessings in his/her life, representing some effects of sins in his/her life.

Another group say: Sins truly shorten the life of a sinner, just as they reduce one's blessings; for Allah ﷻ has many reasons for increasing the blessings in one's sustenance, including the blessings of one's lifespan or age.

Another group say: The effects of sins in shortening the life of a sinner is related to the fact that the reality of life is that of the life of the heart, which is the reason why Allah ﷻ considers the disbeliever as dead, for He ﷻ said: **«(They are) dead, not alive.»**¹

Life, in reality, is that of the heart, so the age of a person is the duration of his/her proper life. Therefore, one's age is the time in one's life that one devotes to Allah ﷻ. Piety, righteousness and obedience increase at those times, which represent the reality of his life, and there is no life except this.

In effect, when a person turns away from Allah, and dedicates him/herself to committing sins, he/she would waste his/her real life here, about which he/she would say one day: **«Oh! If only I had prepared for this life of mine»**²

The life of a person is the duration of his/her life, for there is no life except that of devotion to the Lord; praising Him, remembering Him and pleasing Him.

¹ Surat an-Nahl, Verse 21.

² Surat Al-Fajr, Verse 24.

Sins produce other sins

Sins lead to the production of other sins, until one finds it hard to give them up. A scholar of the past has said: "Among the punishments for a sin is committing a subsequent sin. And among the recompenses for a good deed is doing a subsequent good deed. When a person does a good deed, another good deed besides it says: 'Do me as well.' If he does it, a third one says likewise, and so on; therefore, his good deeds, and recompense for them, increase. The same thing occurs, (but in a negative way), when a person commits a sin."

Consequently, good and bad deeds become established as habits and attributes in one's life. If a righteous person misses an obedient act, he/she would feel strained. He/she would feel like a fish out of water, and would remain calm only once he/she fulfilled his/her obligations.

On the other hand, if a sinner misses a sin, he/she would feel strained, and would be only relax once he/she had committed that sin. In fact, many sinners commit their sins without savouring them, just to prevent the withdrawal symptoms of missing them. One such prominent sinner has said: "One glass (of wine) I drank for pleasure, followed by another to heal myself from it (the first drink)."

Sins weaken the determination of the heart

Sins weaken the determination of the heart, and strengthen the willpower to commit more sins. The resolve for repentance is then weakened gradually, until it is totally removed from the heart. Once half of one's heart is dead, one could no longer repent to Allah ﷻ. So, he/she would express repentance intensely, while his heart is still attached

to these sins, insisting on committing them in any possible manner. So this is one of the most serious ailments of the heart, and the most destructive of all.

Sins become a custom

The continuity of committing sins would lead to a condition where the heart would no longer regard them as vile. They become a common practice, and so a sinner does not worry anymore about other people's comments. Some of the sinners even boast about their evil acts, informing others who did not previously know what they had done. They become extremely delighted when relating their sinful acts.

These type of people are denied a cure and a way to repentance; for the Prophet ﷺ said: "All the sins of my followers will be forgiven except those of the *Mujahirin* (those who commit a sin openly or disclose their sins to people). An example of such disclosure is of a person who commits a sin at night, and although Allah has screened it from the public, then he appears in the morning, saying: 'O so-and-so, I did such-and-such a (evil) deed yesterday.' He spent his night screened by his Lord (none knowing about his sin), yet in the morning he removed Allah's Screen from himself."¹

Every sin is inherited from an earlier nation which Allah ﷻ had destroyed. Homosexuality was inherited from the People of Lut عليه السلام (as most of the people in his village were homosexuals). The cheating of the scales was inherited from the People of Shu'aib عليه السلام. Spreading corruption and

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, "*Al-Adab*", (chapter 60) and Muslim in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", (Hadith 52).

viciousness on earth was inherited from the rule of Pharaoh. Tyranny and arrogance was inherited from the People of Hud عليه السلام.

A sinner is therefore assuming the form of one of these nations, which were enemies of Allah ﷻ.

Abdullah bin Imam Ahmad reported in the book, *Az-Zuhd* of his father, on the authority of Malik bin Dinar who said: "Allah ﷻ revealed to one of the Prophets of the Children of Israel tell his people: 'Do not follow the path of My Enemies; do not assume the form of My Enemies; do not board the ships of My Enemies; do not eat the food of My Enemies; thus they would become like My Enemies.'"

Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "I was sent with a sword before the Hour, until Allah ﷻ is worshipped Alone, without associating any partners with Him. My provision was made under the shade of my lance, and disgrace was set on those people who oppose my command; and whoever copies the manner of a people, he is one of them."²

The sin is the cause for disgrace from Allah ﷻ

Al-Hasan Al-Basri, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "Allah ﷻ disgraces them (sinners) as they disobeyed Him. If He ﷻ had honoured them, He ﷻ would have safeguarded them from committing sins; and those Allah ﷻ humiliates

² Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 50, 92).

will have no one to honour them; for He ﷻ said:
﴿Whomsoever Allah disgraces, none can honour him﴾³

A person also continues to commit a sin until he attaches little importance to it, and the more a sin becomes insignificant to a person, the more it becomes serious and great in the Sight of Allah.

Ibn Mas'ud ؓ said: "A believer sees his sins as if they were the base of a mountain, which he fears might fall on him; whereas the sinner considers his sins like some flies landing on his nose, which he repels so they fly away."⁴

The misfortunes resulting from sins and wrongdoings

Other people and animals suffer misfortunes because of a person's sins.

Abu Hurayrah ؓ said: "Bustards die in their nests because of the injustice of the wrongdoer."

Mujahid said: "Animals curse the sinners among the Children of Adam in times of hardship and drought. They say: This calamity is the result of the sins of mankind."

'Ikrimah said: "All animals, including dung beetles and scorpions say: 'We are denied rain because of the sins of mankind.'"

³ Surat Al-Hajj, Verse 18.

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the "Book of Supplications", (chapter 4), At-Tirmidhi in the book, "The Resurrection", (chapter 49) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/383).

Sins cause disgrace

Sins bring down dishonour and humiliation on sinners. All dignity is in obeying Allah ﷻ; He ﷻ said: **﴿Whosoever desires honour and glory, then to Allah belong all honour and glory﴾**¹ i.e. one should seek it honour and glory by being obedient to Allah ﷻ.

One supplication of a scholar of the past was: “O Allah! Honour me with my obedience to You, but do not disgrace me with my disobedience to You.”

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: “The disgrace of a sin never leaves sinners, for Allah ﷻ has willed that He will disgrace whoever disobeys Him.”

Sins corrupts one's intellect

Sins corrupt the mind; for the mind has its insight, and a sin inevitably extinguishes that insight. One scholar of the past has said: “No one disobeys Allah ﷻ unless their mind is absent (or deficient); and this is evident, for if one's mind were present, to prevent him from committing a sin, one would be under the Protection of Allah ﷻ, Who is fully aware of all his conditions.”

The accumulation of sins leads to the sealing of the heart

When a person indulges incessantly in sin and wrongdoings, his/her heart becomes sealed up, and he/she would be careless and thoughtless, as reported by a scholar in his interpretation of the Verse: **﴿Nay, but on their hearts is the**

¹ Surat Fatir, Verse 10.

***Raan* (covering of sins and evil deeds) which they used to earn²**, he said: “It is one sin after another sin.”

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: “It is one sin on top of another sin, until the heart becomes blind.”

Others have said: “When the wrongdoings and misdeeds of sinners become vastly increased, they will surround their hearts.”

The reality of this ailment is that the heart becomes rusty because of a sin; so when sins increase, the rust increases until it surrounds all the heart, until it dominates it, becoming a seal over it.

A sinner comes under the Curse of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ because of his own sins

The Prophet ﷺ cursed the doer of many sins:

He ﷺ cursed the maker of tattoos and the person who wears them.

He ﷺ cursed the “*wasilah*” and “*mawsulah*” (that is the woman who artificially lengthens (her or someone else’s) hair and the one who gets her hair lengthened).

He ﷺ cursed the “*namisah*” and “*muntamisah*” (that is the woman who tears out hair of (her or someone else’s) eyebrows or the one who get it done).

² Surat Al-Mutaffifin, Verse 14.

He 𐤌 cursed the “*washirah*” and “*mustawshirah*” (that is the woman who tattoos (herself or someone else) or the one who gets herself tattooed).

He 𐤌 cursed the one who benefits from usury and the one who participates in a transaction of usury (writing, signing or witnessing it, etc)

He 𐤌 cursed the wine-presser, the one who has it pressed, the one who drinks it, the one who conveys it, the one to whom it is conveyed, the one who serves it, the one who sells it, the one who benefits from the price paid for it, the one who buys it, and the one for whom it is bought, etc.

He 𐤌 cursed the thief.

He 𐤌 cursed those who alter the natural features of the earth and its boundaries.

He 𐤌 cursed the one who curses his parents.

He 𐤌 cursed the effeminate among men, and women who assume the manners of men.

He 𐤌 cursed those who slaughter animals not for the Sake of Allah 𐤌.

He 𐤌 cursed those who innovate in matters of religion.

He 𐤌 cursed those who create pictures (of people or animals).

He ﷻ cursed those who act in the manner of the people of Lut ؑ (homosexuals).

He ﷻ cursed the one who misguides a blind person.

He ﷻ cursed the one who performs a sexual act with animals (bestiality).

He ﷻ cursed the one who marks an animal on its face.

He ﷻ cursed the one who harms a Muslim and deceives him.

He ﷻ cursed those who visit graves to worship the dead, and those who build mosques and place lamps on them (the graves).

He ﷻ cursed those who insult and abuse the Companions ؓ. Allah ﷻ cursed those who cause corruption on earth and break ties with their kin, and those who transgress the Laws of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.

He ﷻ cursed those who conceal the Revelation of Allah ﷻ.

He ﷻ cursed those who accuse believing chaste women of illegal sexual acts.

He ﷻ cursed the one who assumes the path of the disbelievers to be more guided than the path of the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ cursed a man wearing women's clothes, and a woman wearing men's clothes.

He ﷻ cursed the bribers, the person who receives bribes (the bribed), and the mediator between them.

Sins deprive the sinner of the benefit of the Prophet's supplication

We know that Allah ﷻ ordered His Prophet ﷺ to seek forgiveness for the believing men and women, as He ﷻ said: **«Those (Angels) who bear the Throne (of Allah) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah), saying: “Our Lord! You comprehend all things, in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who repent and follow Your way, and save them from the torment of the blazing Fire! Our Lord! And make them enter the Paradise of Eden which you have promised them – and to the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their offspring! Verily, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. Save them from sins, and whomsoever You save from sins that Day, him verily, You have taken into mercy.” That is the supreme success.»**¹

This is the supplication of the Angels for the repentant believers, who follow the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ. Other people should not seek benefit from this supplication, if they do not possess the same attributes.

The punishments for sins

Sumrah bin Jundub ؓ said: “The Prophet ﷺ very often used to ask his companions: ‘Did anyone of you see a dream?’ So dreams would be narrated to him by those whom Allah wished to tell. One morning, the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Last night

¹ Surat Ghafir, Verses 7-9.

two persons came to me (in a dream) and woke me up and said to me: 'Proceed!' I set out with them and we came across a man lying down, and behold, another man was standing over his head, holding a big rock. Behold, he was throwing the rock at the man's head, injuring it. The rock rolled away, so the thrower followed it and picked it up again. By the time he reached the man, his head returned to the normal state. The thrower then did the same as he had done before. I said to my two companions: '*Subhan Allah!* Who are these two persons?' They said: 'Proceed!' So we proceeded and came to one man lying flat on his back and another man standing over his head with an iron hook, and behold, he would put the hook in one side of the man's mouth and tear off that side of his face to the back (of the neck), and similarly tear his nose from front to back, and his eye from front to back. Then he turned to the other side of the man's face and did just as he had done with the other side. He hardly completed this side when the other side returned to its normal state. Then he returned to it to repeat what he had done before. I said to my two companions: '*Subhan Allah!* Who are these two persons?' They said to me: 'Proceed!' So we proceeded and came across something like a *Tannur* (a kind of baking oven, a pit usually clay-lined for baking bread)' – I think the Prophet ﷺ said: 'In that oven there was much noise and voices.' The Prophet added: 'We looked into it and found naked men and women, and behold, a flame of fire was approaching them from underneath, and when it reached them, they screamed loudly. I asked them: 'Who are these?' They said to me: 'Proceed!' And so we proceeded and came across a river' – I think he ﷺ said: '...red like blood.' The Prophet added: 'And behold, in the river there was a man swimming, and on the bank there was a man who had collected many stones. Behold, while the

other man was swimming, he went near him. The former opened his mouth and the latter (on the bank) threw a stone into his mouth, whereupon he continued swimming again. He returned and every time the performance was repeated, I asked my two companions: 'Who are these (two) persons?' They replied: 'Proceed! Proceed!' And we proceeded till we came to a man with a repulsive appearance, the most repulsive appearance, you could ever saw a man having! Next to him there was a fire, which he was kindling it and running around. I asked my companions: 'Who is this (man)?' They said to me: 'Proceed! Proceed!' So we proceeded till we reached a garden with dense, deep green vegetation, possessing all sorts of spring colours. In the midst of the garden there was a very tall man, and I could hardly see his head because of his great height, and around him there were children, in such a large number as I have never seen (before). I said to my companions: 'Who is this?' They replied: 'Proceed! Proceed!' So we proceeded till we came to a huge majestic garden, greater and better than I have ever seen (before)! My two companions said to me: 'Go up,' and I went up.' The Prophet added: 'So we ascended till we reached a city built of gold and silver bricks, and we went to its gate and asked (the gatekeeper) to open the gate, and it was opened and we entered the city and found in it, men with one side of their bodies as handsome as the handsomest person you have ever seen, and the other side as ugly as the ugliest person you have ever seen. My two companions ordered those men to throw themselves into the river. Behold, there was a river flowing across (the city), and its water was like milk in whiteness. Those men went and threw themselves in it, and then returned to us after the ugliness (of their bodies) had disappeared and they became (restored to) the best shape.' The Prophet ﷺ further added:

'My two companions (angels) said to me: 'This place is the Paradise of Eden, and that is your place.' I raised up my sight, and behold, there I saw a palace like a white cloud! My two companions said to me: 'That (palace) is your place.' I said to them: 'May Allah bless you both! Let me enter it.' They replied: 'As for now, you will not enter it, but you shall enter it (one day). I said to them: 'I have seen many wonders tonight. What does all that mean, that which I have seen?' They replied: 'We will inform you: As for the first man you came upon whose head was being injured with the rock, he is the symbol of the one who studies the Qur'an and then neither recites it nor acts on its orders, and sleeps, neglecting the enjoined prayers. As for the man you came upon whose sides of his mouth, nostrils and eyes were torn off from front to back, he is the symbol of the man who goes out of his house in the morning and tells so many lies that it spreads all over the world. And those naked men and women whom you saw in a construction resembling an oven, they are the adulterers and the adulteresses, and the man whom you saw swimming in the river and given a stone to swallow, is the eater of usury (*Riba*) and the bad looking man whom you saw near the fire kindling it and going round it, is Malik, the gatekeeper of Hell, and the tall man whom you saw in the garden is Abraham, and the children around him are those children who die with *Al-Fitra* (the Islamic Faith).' The narrator added: 'Some Muslims asked the Prophet: 'O Messenger of Allah! What about the children of pagans?' The Prophet replied: 'And also the children of pagans.' The Prophet added: 'My two companions added: 'The men you saw half handsome and half ugly were those persons who

had mixed an act that was good with another that was bad, but Allah forgave them.”¹

Other effects of sins and misdeeds

Sins cause corruption and rottenness to different aspects of the environment, such as one's residence, water, air, plants and fruit. Allah ﷻ has said: **«Evil (sins and disobedience to Allah) has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned, that He (Allah) may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return (by repenting to Allah and begging His Pardon)»**²

Mujahid said: “When an oppressor is given responsibility, he spreads injustice and evil deeds, so Allah ﷻ withholds the rainfall, so the oppressor puts his effort into making mischief in the land; destroying the crops and the cattle. But Allah ﷻ does not like mischief.” Then he recited: **«Evil (sins and disobedience to Allah) has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned.»** Then he said: ‘By Allah, it is not your sea here, but it refers to every community located by a flowing river.’

‘Ikrimah said: “Evil has appeared on land and sea. I do not say it is this sea of yours, but every community situated near water.”

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Funerals”, (chapter 93), Muslim in the, “Book of Visions”, (Hadith 17), Abu Dawud in the, “Book of *Sunnah*”, (chapter 8), At-Tirmidhi in the, “Book of Visions”, (chapter 10), Al-Muwatta’ in the, “Book of Visions”, (Hadith 2), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 14, 44, 50).

² Surat ar-Rum, Verse 41.

I say: Allah ﷻ has named sweet water as sea, saying: **«The two seas (kinds of water) are not alike; this is palatable, sweet and pleasant to drink, and that is salty and bitter»**¹; there is no sea which is both sweet and still. Sweet water is in running rivers, while the bitter sea is still. So Allah ﷻ named the communities located by running rivers with the name of that water.

Ibn Zayd recited the Verse **«Evil (sins and disobedience to Allah) has appeared on land and sea»**, saying: “It is sins.” He meant that sins are the cause for the appearance of all aspects of evil, which Allah ﷻ made as a punishment for sinners. Whenever they produce a sin, Allah ﷻ produces a punishment for them, as highlighted in the Verse: **«that He (Allah) may make them taste a part of that which they have done»**. Allah ﷻ only makes us taste a small part of what we have done. But, should He ﷻ make us taste the effect of all the sins that we have committed, He ﷻ would not have left any human on this earth!

Among the effects of sins on this earth is the occurrence of earthquakes and other seismic activities, which Allah ﷻ causes as a punishment and as a withdrawal of His Blessings on it.

The Prophet ﷺ passed by the village of Thamud², and forbade his Companions from entering their dwellings, except when weeping (out of fear of the Punishment of Allah ﷻ which destroyed the nation of Thamud). He ﷺ forbade them from drinking the water of that village, or eating

¹ Surat Fatir, Verse 12.

² An ancient nation which was destroyed by Allah ﷻ for its disbelief.

anything made by using that water, because of the effect of the sins committed by that community, which had led to the shortages and deficiency in their produce, etc.

Imam Ahmad reported in his *Musnad*: “There was found in the treasure house of Banu Umayyah a grain of wheat the size of a date-stone, in a container on which was written: ‘This would grow in times of justice.’”

Many diseases were produced (Allah ﷻ made them occur) because of the sins of His Servants.

A group of desert people informed me that dates used to be much bigger than they are now, and they had never witnessed the diseases which affect their fruit now.

Sins can also affect the shape and creation. At-Tirmidhi reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ created Adam, and his height was sixty arms. Mankind continues to shorten (in size) until now...”³

When Allah ﷻ decides to purify the earth from oppressors, wrongdoers and traitors, He ﷻ brings out one of His Servants, from the family of His Prophet ﷺ, to spread justice on the earth after it was filled with injustice. Isa ﷺ (Jesus) will be sent to fight the Jews and Christians, the followers of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal, the False Messiah, and establish Islam on earth. It will be then that the earth will bring forth its blessings and would return to its normal state. Hunters would eat their kill and then take shade underneath its skull. A bunch of grapes would become a heavy load for camels.

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “The Prophets”, (chapter 1).

All this will take place because when the earth is purified of sins, the traces of Allah's Blessings would appear on its surface once more.

The Punishments for Sins

Sins extinguish the light of *ghaira* (the sense of honour) in the heart. The sense of honour is to a person's life like the basal temperature is to the rest of the body; it removes all aspects of wickedness and bad attributes in one's personality. The most dignified people are the ones who observe a strong sense of honour in themselves, their families, and others. The Prophet ﷺ had more *ghaira* than anyone else towards the *Ummah*, and Allah ﷻ has more *ghaira* than him, as confirmed in the Hadith, in which the Prophet ﷺ said: "Do you wonder at Sa'd's sense of *ghaira* (ardour)? Verily, I have more sense of *ghaira* than Sa'd, and Allah has more sense of *ghaira* than I."¹

The Prophet ﷺ also said in the sermon about the eclipse: "O followers of Muhammad! By Allah! There is none who has more *ghaira* (self-respect) than Allah as He has forbidden that His Servants, male or female, commit adultery (illegal sexual intercourse)."²

He ﷺ also said: "No one has more *ghaira* than Allah. There is none who has a greater sense of *ghaira* than Allah, and for that reason He has forbidden shameful sins, whether committed openly or secretly. And there is none who likes that people should repent to Him and beg His pardon more

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari.

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari, on the authority of 'Aishah ؓ.

than Allah, so for this reason He sent (us) warners and bearers of good news. And there is none who likes to be praised more than Allah does, so that is why He praises Himself.”³

He ﷺ combined, in this Hadith, the sense of honour, the basis of which is a dislike of all that is evil, and love of apology and forgiveness, which suggests the perfection of justice and mercy.

People should seek forgiveness from Allah ﷻ, Who has the Most sense of *ghaira*, for He ﷻ pardons those who repent to him.

Allah ﷻ never held His Servants to account for their misdeeds until He ﷻ had given them a chance to seek His Pardon. It is for this reason that He ﷻ dispatched His Messengers ﷺ and sent down His Revelation as a warning, for this shows the utmost Glory and Perfection.

There are many people who hastily proceed to punish others, once their sense of honour intensifies, without allowing them to make any excuses. Their extreme *ghaira* does not let them accept any excuse. On the other hand, there are other people who accept any excuse, because they have a weak sense of honour.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “There is jealousy which Allah loves and jealousy which Allah hates. That which Allah loves is

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Tawheed*”, (chapter 15, 20), Muslim in the “Book of Repentance”, (Hadith 32-36), At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Supplications”, (chapter 95), Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 381, 432).

jealousy regarding a matter of doubt, and that which Allah hates is jealousy regarding something which is not doubtful.”⁴

What is recommended is to combine *ghaira* with excuse. One should exert his sense of honour in the right circumstances, and excuse others at a time for excuses.

Allah ﷻ possesses the complete Attributes of Perfection. Therefore, He ﷻ is the One truly deserving All Praise. None should praise in their manners, except in the manner in which He ﷻ has praised Himself.

The one who observes a good sense of honour is indeed in harmony with one of Allah’s Attributes, which will draw him/her closer to Allah’s Mercy, and make him/her dearer to Allah ﷻ, Who is All-Merciful and loves the merciful among His Servants; He ﷻ is the All-Generous and loves the generous among His Servants; He ﷻ is the All-Knower and loves the scholars among His Servants; He ﷻ is the All-Powerful and loves the strong believer more than the weak believer.

Sins and all evil acts prevent a person from assuming these attributes; a small thought turns into a devilish whispering; a whispering turns into a will, which turns into a strong determination and becomes an action. The sinful act later becomes an established practice in the life of the sinner, and then it becomes difficult to give it up.

⁴ Recorded by Abu Dawud in the “Book of *Jihad*”, (chapter 104), an-Nassai in the “Book of *Zakat*”, (chapter 66), Ibn Maajah in the “Book of Marriage”, (chapter 56) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 445, 446).

As the sinner becomes intensely attached to his evil acts, his sense of honour weakens towards himself, his family and the rest of people. It weakens to such extent that he no longer sees the evil in his actions, which is the final stage of his destruction. In fact, many of such people encourage others to do the same, and this is the reason that a cuckold is the most repulsive of Allah's creation, and why Paradise is forbidden for him.

This proves that *ghaira* is a basis of religion; and he who has no *ghaira*, has no religion. *Ghaira* protects the heart and the limbs, and block all aspects of sins.

The *ghaira* in the heart is like the power of immunity which resists to any incoming ailment.

Sins eliminate *Haya*' (Modesty)

Sins take away from the sinner all sense of modesty which is the living substance of the heart. Modesty is defined as the basis of all good, and its removal is the elimination of all that is good.

The Prophet ﷺ said: "*Haya*' is all good."¹

He ﷺ also said: "A part of that which people understood from the speech of the earlier prophets is: 'If you have no shame, do what you want.'"² This Hadith has two interpretations:

¹ Recorded by Muslim in the "Book of *Iman*", (Hadith 61) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 426, 427, 436).

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, "The Prophets", (chapter 54), Abu Dawud in the book, "*Al-Adab*", (chapter 6), Ibn Maajah in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", (chapter 17) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 121, 122) (5/ 273).

First, it threatens and warns of punishment, because the one who has no shame does all evil acts, due to the lack of modesty and shame, which was the interpretation of Abu Ubaydah, may Allah be pleased with him.

Second, if the action does not exceed the boundaries of shame from Allah, then do it, and what should be avoided is the action which is too shameful to do before Allah. This was the interpretation of Imam Ahmad according to the narration of Ibn Hani'.

The first is a warning or a threat as in the Verse: **﴿Do what you will﴾**³, while the second is in the form of permission. If it is said: Is there any possibility to assume both interpretations?

I say: No, because there is a great difference between permission and warning; however, considering one of the interpretations suggests considering the other.

Sins weaken all factors of modesty in a person, to an extent that one becomes careless, despite knowing that other people are aware of his sinful life. The majority of the sinners are not ashamed to discuss their evil deeds, because they possess no sense of decency or modesty.

Sins weaken the heart

Sins affect one's heart so it fails to glorify the Lord ﷻ and weakens its sense of tranquillity. If one's heart was filled with sobriety it would not have dared to commit any sin.

³ Surat Fussilat, Verse 40.

Some deceived people say: “What induces me sometimes to commit sins is the hope of benefiting from Allah’s Mercy, not the weakness of glorifying Him in my heart.”

This is simply self-deception; because glorifying Allah ﷻ in one’s heart means glorifying His Sanctity, which would oppose the committing of any sins.

Those who boldly indulge in disobeying Allah ﷻ do not consider Him with the correct estimation due to Him ﷻ.

This is a punishment from Allah ﷻ which removes the sense of fear from the hearts of His Servants, so that sinners would despise him/her the way he/she disrespected the Commands of Allah ﷻ.

People love another person according to his/her level of love for Allah ﷻ; they fear him/her according to the level of his/her fear of Allah; they praise him/her according to the level of his/her praise for Allah ﷻ. How could a person violate the sanctity of Allah ﷻ and not expect people to violate his/her sanctity?

Allah ﷻ has stated in His Book (the Qur’an) the punishment due for sins. He ﷻ cast the big sinners into a state of disbelief for what they had earned. He ﷻ sealed their hearts with their sins, and forgot them the way they had forgotten their Lord. He ﷻ wasted them the way they had wasted His Religion. Allah ﷻ stated in His Book, after describing the prostration of all His Creatures to Him: **(Whomsoever Allah disgraces, none can honour him)**¹; when they

¹ Surat Al-Hajj, Verse 18.

despised the act of prostrating to Allah ﷻ and refused to perform it, He ﷻ disgraced them; and no one could honour them after they had been humiliated by Allah ﷻ.

Sins may lead a person to become forgotten by Allah ﷻ

It is a punishment for a sinner, indulging in sins, to eventually be forgotten by Allah ﷻ, and left alone with the devil. This is a stage of destruction for which there is no hope of safety. For Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿O you who believe! Fear Allah and keep your duty to Him. And let every person look to what he has sent forth for the morrow, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what you do. And be not like those who forgot Allah, and He caused them to forget themselves. Those are the *Fasiqun* (rebellious and disobedient to Allah)﴾²**

Allah ﷻ ordered us to fear Him (be mindful of Him in all our actions) and warned us not to imitate those who have become disobedient to Him. He ﷻ informed us that He punished those who had rejected righteousness, by letting them forget themselves – i.e. to forget the benefits which could save them from the Punishment in the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ made them forget the Right Path, which would lead them to the Eternal Life in Paradise where they could enjoy its perfect blessings.

You may see the sinner selfishly wasting benefits for him/her self, as his heart is made heedless of remembrance Allah ﷻ; he/she follows his/her own lusts, so his/her deeds have been lost, because he/she rejects the priceless Reward of Allah for the meagre affairs of this world!

² Surat Al-Hashr, Verses 18-19.

A sinner only has him/her self to blame, for he/she is unjust to him/her self, not to Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ is the Provider of all Blessings, and is not in need of anything from His Creatures.

Sins take a person out from the scope of *Ihsan*

Ihsan is perfection in performing one's obligations. It is worshipping Allah as though you see Him, but if you are unable to imagine Him, you should remember that He ﷻ sees you.

When a sinner is removed from the state of *Ihsan*, he/she is deprived of receiving the Reward(s) of Allah ﷻ, which are given to those who excel in fulfilling their religious duties.

When *Ihsan* is related to the heart, it prevents it from committing sins; because a person who worships Allah ﷻ, with perfection, is one whose heart is filled with love, hope, fear and remembrance of Allah ﷻ. He worships Allah ﷻ as though he sees Him, and so he is prevented from disobeying Him.

Therefore, when a person is removed from the state of *Ihsan*, he/she is left among his/her own private company to try to enjoy life. If Allah ﷻ wants good for him/her, He ﷻ assigns him/her at the circle of the believers; but if he/she disobeys Allah ﷻ and indulges in sins, Allah ﷻ removes him/her from the state of *Iman* (good faith), as was said by the Prophet ﷺ: "A fornicator is not a believer at the time of committing fornication. The one who drinks wine is not a believer at the

time of drinking wine. A thief is not a believer at the time of thieving...”¹

Therefore, avoid committing sins, whatever their nature, and take the chance to repent, while it is still possible for you to do so.

Sins deprive a person of the protection of Allah ﷻ.

Whoever avoids the company of the believers, has denied the Protection of Allah ﷻ, Who defends those who believe, and denied all the good things mentioned by Allah ﷻ in his Book that are provided for the believers. There are around a hundred qualities, and each one is better than this world and what it contains; for example:

Great reward: **﴿And Allah will grant the believers a Great Reward﴾**²

Protection from the evil of this world and the Hereafter: **﴿Truly, Allah defends those who believe﴾**³

The Angels who bear the Throne seek forgiveness for the believers: **﴿Those (Angels) who bear the Throne (of Allah) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe﴾**⁴

¹ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Al-Fitan*” (chapter 3).

² Surat an-Nisa’, Verse 146.

³ Surat Al-Hajj, Verse 38.

⁴ Surat Ghafir, Verse 7.

Allah ﷻ guards those who believe: **﴿Allah is the protector and guardian of those who believe﴾**⁵

Allah ﷻ commands His Angels to reassure the believers: **﴿When your Lord revealed to the Angels, “Verily, I am with you, so keep firm, O those who have believed﴾**⁶

They have honour: **﴿But honour, power and glory belong to Allah, and to His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and to the believers, but the hypocrites do not know.﴾**⁷

Allah is in the company of the believers: **﴿Verily, Allah is with the believers﴾**⁸

Exaltation in higher degrees: **﴿Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe﴾**⁹

Allah ﷻ grants righteous people a double portion of His Mercy, a light to guide them in their life, and forgiveness of their misdeeds.

Allah ﷻ loves them and makes His Angels, His Prophets, and all His Pious Servants love them too: **﴿Verily, those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, the Most Gracious will bestow love upon them﴾**¹

⁵ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 257.

⁶ Surat Al-Anfal, Verse 12.

⁷ Surat Al-Munafiqun, Verse 8.

⁸ Surat Al-Anfal, Verse 19.

⁹ Surat Al-Mujadilah, Verse 11.

¹ Surat Mariyam, Verse 96.

Allah ﷻ bestows the feeling of serenity upon them: **«So whosoever believes and does righteous good deeds, upon such shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve»**²

Allah ﷻ is the One Who bestows His blessings upon them, and commands us to ask Him to guide us to their right path, seventeenth times, every night and day (when reciting Surat Al-Fatihah).

The Qur'an is a guide and healing for them: **«Say: It is for those who believe, a guide and healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness in their ears, and it is blindness for them. They are those who are called from a place, far away»**³

Every good in this world and the Hereafter is caused by good faith (and every evil in this world and the Hereafter is caused by the absence of the good faith).

Some people care little about committing sins, which would take them out from the state of *Iman* (faith), but it does not mean they are no longer Muslims. However, if they persist on committing sins, then there is worry that their hearts might become overcome by those sins, which means they could end up being removed from the status of Islam altogether.

It is for this reason that one scholar of the past said: "You fear sins, but I fear polytheism."

² Surat Al-An'am, Verse 48.

³ Surat Fussilat, Verse 44.

Sins weaken the course of the heart towards Allah and the Last Day

Sins stand as obstacles in the way of one's heart, in obeying the Lord; they prevent one from stepping forward towards one's Lord, in a state of purity.

The heart normally moves towards Allah with strength, but when it is overpowered by sins, its power is weakened; and if its power is removed, the heart breaks its connection with Allah ﷻ, so then it becomes harder to bring it back.

A sin could either kill the heart, or inflict it with a serious ailment, weakening its power, until its weakness ends in one of the eight ailments, from which the Prophet ﷺ sought refuge in Allah, which are: Worry, grief, inability, laziness, cowardice, miserliness, the heavy burden of debts, and the overpowering of men.

Worry and grief are connected; when a troubling matter invades the heart which is concerned with a future expected matter, then it causes worry. But if it was concerned with a past matter, it causes grief.

Inability and laziness are connected: if a person neglects the factors which produce goodness and success, because of his/her incapacity, then it is inability. But if the reason is due to a lack of will, then it is laziness.

Cowardice and miserliness are connected: if a person produces no benefit, when the cause is in his/her body, then it is a matter of cowardice. But if it is due to his/her wealth, then it is miserliness.

The burden of debts and the overpowering of men are connected: when other people act with a sense of superiority towards a person, and the reason is justified, then it is out of the heavy burden of a debt. But if it is not justified, then it is due to the overpowering of men.

Sins are one of the reasons which bring these eight ailments. They bring evil affliction, misery, the most terrible calamities, and the malice of enemies. They are also one of the powerful reasons that lead to the cessation of Allah's Blessings, which later turn into His Punishment and Curse.

Sins hold back the Blessings of Allah ﷻ (to come) and incite His Anger

No blessing is removed from a Servant of Allah ﷻ except by his/her own misdeeds; and no misfortune or punishment befalls him/her but from his/her own sins.

Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ said: "No affliction comes down except due to a sin, and it is not removed except with repentance", for Allah ﷻ said: **«Whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much.»**¹ He ﷻ also said: **«That is so because Allah will never change a Grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in themselves.»**²

Allah ﷻ informs us that He will not change the Blessings, which He ﷻ has bestowed upon His Servant, unless His Servant changes them for him/her self. But a sinner changes

¹ Surat Ash-Shura, Verse 30.

² Surat Al-Anfal, Verse 53.

obedience to Allah into disobedience, thankfulness for the Blessings of Allah into ungratefulness towards Him ﷻ, and the causes that lead to Allah's Pleasure into those that cause His Curse. Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Verily, Allah will not change the (good) condition of a people as long as they do not change their state themselves (by continuing to commit sins and be ungrateful and disobedient to Allah)﴾**³

Allah ﷻ instils terror and fear in the hearts of sinners

A sinner's heart is always in state of anxiety and terror, because obedience to Allah ﷻ represents the great fortress of Allah, so whoever enters it is safe from the Punishment of this world and the Hereafter; but whoever leaves it would be surrounded by all aspects of fear and worry.

A sinner's heart is always restless; he/she feels nervous about any noise he/she hears, and believes that any misfortune is intended for him/her. But one who fears Allah would be spared all these worries.

Sins implant a sense of isolation in the heart. A sinner feels secluded from his/her Lord and from other people. As he/she commits more sins, his/her isolation increases, and so he/she would endure the bitterness of life, as a worried lonely person.

A sinner feels delighted when committing a sin, but this is just a pleasure of the moment, as his/her heart is filled with anxiety afterwards.

³ Surat Ar-Ra'd, Verse 11.

The secret in this matter is that obedience to Allah ﷻ brings the devout person closer to Him ﷻ, and closer to other people that he/she loves, even if they are far away from him/her.

Disobedience to Allah ﷻ attracts the feeling of remoteness from Allah ﷻ, and the most severe form is that of polytheism, associating partners with Allah.

Sins draw one's heart away from righteousness

Sins take the heart from its natural state of piety to a state of corruption and deviation. The effect of sins in the heart is like that of diseases on the body. Sins are the ailments of the heart, and there is no cure for the heart, except giving up those sins.

One who stops him/her self from following his/her own desires, his/her heart would enjoy the Grace of Allah in this world, before reaching his/her destination in Paradise. The Verse: **﴿Verily, the pious believers will be in Delight, and verily, the sinners will be in the blazing Fire﴾**¹ is not just limited to the Grace and the Blazing Fire of the Hereafter; it also refers to their states in the three abodes: the abode of this world, the abode of the *Barzakh* (the state of existence during the interval from the moment a person dies to the Day of Resurrection), and the abode of eternity; those obedient to Allah would enjoy His Grace, whereas sinners would endure His Punishment.

The real blessing is that which a person feels in his/her heart, and the real punishment is that which a sinner endures in

¹ Surat Al-Infitar, Verse 13-14.

his/her heart. There is no worse a punishment than that of fear, depression and anxiety, which suffocate one's heart, turning away from the remembrance of Allah ﷻ and the Last Day.

In the *Barzakh* state, a sinner would suffer the punishment of separation, and the feeling of regret about having missed out on the Grace of Allah. The remorse and anxiety would render his/her mind useless, until the Day when Allah ﷻ returns the mind to the body, ordering its resurrection. It is then that the punishment moves to another, more bitter stage. Those who obeyed Allah ﷻ in this world would have the extreme delight of His Company, having serenity in their hearts, being filled with the love and remembrance of Him ﷻ. But those who sold their priceless chance of success for a low price should have sought the true value of their product with people of knowledge.

It is strange that a product (life transactions) possessed by a person should be bought by Allah ﷻ, for the price of Paradise, with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as the intermediary in this trade, yet one could sell one's life for the lowest price!

Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Whomsoever Allah disgraces, none can honour him.﴾**

Sins darken the heart

Sins blind the heart's insight, blot out its light, and block all means towards its right guidance.

When Imam Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, saw signs of remarkable knowledge in Imam Shafi'i, he told him: "I see that Allah ﷻ has cast a light upon you, so do not extinguish it with the darkness of disobedience to Him (by committing a misdeed)."

When a person continues to do misdeeds, the original light, which Allah ﷻ had cast in his/her heart, continues to decrease, as the darkness of sins takes over, until it overwhelms the whole heart, and casts it in the world of darkness; the world of self-destruction.

This darkness spreads in the limbs until it reaches the face, turning it into a gloomy disillusioned figure.

This effect is also carried over to the Life After Death, and adds to the darkness of the grave. The Prophet ﷺ said: "These graves are filled with darkness, over its people, but Allah sheds light on them, with my prayer upon them."

On the Day of Resurrection, all people would be gathered, with their faces raised high and clearly seen by everyone. The faces of sinners will be blackened, like charcoal. It is a punishment which is not equal in weight to all the worldly desires; so one must be patient in this world.

Sins disgrace the self

Sins disgrace the self and turn into the meanest and lowest of all creations, just as acts of obedience to Allah ﷻ turn it into the most honourable and praiseworthy; for Allah ﷻ said: **«Indeed, he who succeeds is he who purifies his own soul. And indeed he who fails is he who corrupts his own**

soul)¹ (i.e. the one who succeeds is the one who obeys and performs all that Allah has ordered, by following the true faith of Islamic Monotheism and by doing righteous deeds; but the one who fails is the one who disobeys what Allah has ordered, by rejecting the true faith of Monotheism or by following polytheism, or by doing every kind of evil.)

A sinner conceals his/herself in his/her sins and hides; avoiding meeting people because of his/her sinful activities. Whereas an obedient Servant of Allah ﷻ feels his/herself elevated and honoured; and this state of dignity is due to his/her righteousness.

Sins allow a sinner to become a prisoner of the devil

A sinner is always in the grasp of Satan and his/her own desires. He/she is detained and imprisoned by the worst enemy of mankind. There is no narrower a prison than that of one's base desires, and there are no more dreadful a length of chains than that of passion.

How could such a detained and imprisoned heart turn towards Allah and the Last Day?

When the heart is chained, all types of ailments rush towards it from every side. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Satan is a wolf for mankind."

Just as an isolated sheep is at the mercy of wolves, a person without the protection of Allah ﷻ, is at the mercy of his/her wolf (the devil). The Protection of Allah ﷻ would only

¹ Surat Ash-Shams, Verse 109.

safeguard one when one is righteous and fearful of one's Lord.

Divine Protection saves one from the punishment of this world and the Hereafter.

Therefore, whenever one's heart is distant from Allah ﷻ, it is subjected to all sorts of ailments, and the closer it is to Allah ﷻ, the more distant it is from all types of diseases.

Distance from Allah ﷻ is classified under many categories; some of them are more serious than others:

Carelessness and negligence (of some obligations) distance the heart from Allah ﷻ. The distancing from Allah caused by a sin is more serious than that caused by carelessness. The distancing from Allah caused by innovation in religion is more serious than that caused by a sin. But the distance from Allah caused by hypocrisy (in religion) and polytheism (associating partners to Allah) is the most serious of them all.

Sins result in losing one's status before Allah and before His Creation

The most honourable of people with Allah are those who have "*taqwa*" (piety). A person's closeness to Allah ﷻ depends on the degree of both his/her fear of Allah and the sincerity of his/her good deeds. When a person disobeys Allah ﷻ, Allah's Respect for him/her falls and then Allah ﷻ makes people lose all esteem in their hearts for him/her. When he/she loses all respect from people, he/she would live a life of disgrace, worry and sadness.

One of the greatest Blessings of Allah ﷻ upon His Servant is to elevate his/her status among mankind. It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ has assigned such attribute to His Prophets and Messengers, as He ﷻ said: **«Remember Our Servants, Ibrahim (Abraham), Ishāq (Isaac), and Ya'qub (Jacob), (all) owners of strength (in worshipping Us) and also of religious understanding. Verily, We did choose them by granting them (a good thing); the remembrance of the Home (in the Hereafter; they used to make people remember it, and used to invite people to obey Allah and do good deeds for the Hereafter) And they are with Us, verily, of the chosen and the best.»**¹

The good thing here, also means the honourable mention that Ibrahim ؑ had asked Allah ﷻ to grant him, when he said: **«Grant me an honourable mention in later generations.»**² Allah ﷻ also stated about His beloved Prophets: **«We gave them from Our Mercy (a good provision in plenty), and We granted them honour upon the tongues (of all nations, that everyone should remember them with good praise)»**³

Allah ﷻ also told His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: **«... and have We not raised high your fame?»**⁴

Those who follow the teachings of the Prophets have their share of that honour, according to the level of their righteousness.

¹ Surat Sād, Verses 45-47.

² Surat Ash-Shu'ara', Verse 84.

³ Surat Maryam, Verse 50.

⁴ Surat Ash-Sharh, Verse 4.

Sins deny sinners all words or titles of praise and honour

A sinner is always identified with despicable names. He is denied such names as: believer, dutiful, reverent, pious, obedient, etc. but he is labelled with names such as: impudent, disobedient, opponent, insolent, corrupt, evil, cursed, adulterer, thief, killer, liar, traitor, homosexual, out cast, loner, trouble maker, etc.

Allah ﷻ said: **«How bad is it to insult one's brother in Islam after having faith (i.e. to address your Muslim brother (a faithful believer) as: "O wicked", or "O sinner")»**⁵ He ﷻ has cursed such names of impudence which attract His Anger and Curse.

However, good names, attract His Mercy, His Pleasure, and entry to His Paradise. These names are granted by Allah ﷻ to His devoted believers. Thus, none can prevent what He has willed to bestow, nor can anyone bestow what He has willed to prevent.

Sins have the effect of reducing one's intellect

When you consider two people, one obedient to Allah and the other disobedient to Allah, you will see that the intellect of the one who is obedient to Allah is better, that his/her opinion is sounder, and that he/she is often closer to the truth. Therefore, you find that the Qur'an always addresses 'men of understanding': **«So fear me, O men of understanding»**⁶ and **«So fear Allah, O men of**

⁵ Surat Al-Hujurat, Verse 61

⁶ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 197.

understanding, in order that you may be successful.﴾⁷ and ﴿But none remember, except men of understanding.﴾⁸

How could a person have true intellect if he/she disobeys Allah ﷻ in Allah's World, knowing that He ﷻ is watching over him/her? He/she commits a sin, knowing that he/she cannot conceal himself from Allah's Sight, ignoring the fact that he/she is inviting the Curse of Allah ﷻ upon him/her. He/she knows that his/her sinful activities drive him/her away from Allah's Pleasure and Allah's Protection. He/she knows that he/she would be denied looking at Allah's Face on the Day of Judgment, and would be in the company of those who had earned Allah's Anger.

What sense of reason could there be in preferring the satisfaction of one's own pleasure, which lasts an hour, a day or even a year, to Everlasting Grace, in Paradise?

To live for Everlasting Grace is the happiness given to a believer, in this world and the Hereafter.

It is not difficult for a reasonable person to realize that attaining real pleasure, happiness and delight in this life and the Hereafter requires that one pleases the Lord, and does not earn His Anger nor His Curse.

A person who pleases Allah ﷻ, by adhering to His Commands, enjoys real pleasure in life, with a living heart that experiences every blessing bestowed upon it. But one

⁷ Surat Al-Ma'idah, Verse 100.

⁸ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 269.

who displeases Allah ﷻ, indulging in sinful activities, would not be free of worry, anxiety or misery.

Therefore, a person who exchanges the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace; the Prophets, the true followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the martyrs, and the righteous, with those who have earned Allah's Anger and Curse, certainly has a defective intellect.

Sins lead to severing the tie with Allah ﷻ

When there is a rupture of relations with Allah ﷻ, all causes of goodness disappear, while causes of evil emerge. What kind of life could one lead if one broke one's relations with one's Master, Whom one cannot do without, and Who is irreplaceable? One would simply be left as easy prey to his arch-enemy, who would subject one to all kinds of suffering. One past scholar said: "You see a man caught between (obeying) Allah ﷻ and (obeying) Satan; if he refuses to adhere to Allah's Commands, Satan would overpower him and take control of his lost mind."

Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿Remember when We said to the Angels: "Prostrate yourselves unto Adam." So they prostrated themselves, except Iblis (Satan). He was one of the Jinn; he disobeyed the command of his Lord. Will you then take him and his offspring as protectors and helpers rather than Me, while they are enemies of you? What an evil is the exchange for the wrongdoers.﴾**¹

¹ Surat Al-Kahf, Verse 50.

Allah ﷻ told His Servants: ‘I have honoured your father (Adam ﷺ), and raised his status, and preferred him to others. I ordered My Angels to prostrate to him, as a sign of honour to him, and they obeyed Me, except My Enemy and his enemy (Iblis). So how could you take him and his offspring as your allies, besides Me, and how dare you obey him and disobey Me, while he is your arch-enemy?

You have followed My enemy after I had commanded you to take him as your enemy. You know that whoever befriends the enemy of the King is also considered the enemy of the King; for love and obedience cannot be fulfilled except by manifesting enmity towards the enemies of the Obeyed (Allah ﷻ), and by joining His Supporters.

Sins erase all benedictions

Sins erase many blessings in life, the blessing of livelihood: the blessing of knowledge, the blessing of work, and the blessing of obedience to Allah ﷻ.

In total, sins eradicate all blessings of one’s religion and one’s world. The blessings of the land are eradicated only by the sins of mankind; Allah ﷻ said: **‘If the people of the towns had believed and had piety, certainly, We would have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth)’**¹ and He ﷻ also said: **‘If they had believed in Allah, and gone the Right Way, We would have bestowed on them water in abundance, that We might try them**

¹ Surat Al-A’raf, Verse 96.

with². Therefore a Servant of Allah is denied His Blessing for a sin which he/she had committed.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The Holy Spirit has blown in my soul (to inform me) that no living soul would die until it has received all its provision; so fear Allah and act well in asking Him, for the Blessings of Allah are earned only in obeying Him. Allah has provided mercy and joy in pleasing Him and being certain in Him; yet He ﷻ made worry and sadness in earning His Curse and being suspicious of Him.”³

Allah ﷻ said, in a Hadith Qudsi, reported by the Prophet ﷺ: “I am Allah. There is no god but Me. If I am pleased, I bestow My Grace upon My Servant, and there is no limit to My Blessings. When I am Angry, I Curse, and My Curse reaches the seventh offspring of a person.” The range of the blessing is not in its abundance, nor is the extension of one’s life, by the addition of months or years. Rather, the comfort of these blessings in one’s life lies in Allah’s Benediction of them.

The existence of a person is manifest as the period of his/her life, but there is no life for one who rejects the Commandments of Allah, and was busy following his/her own desires; the life of an animal would be better than his. Rather, the life of a person is defined by the life of his/her heart; and there is no life in one’s heart, except by having complete love and belief in Allah ﷻ, worshipping Him Alone. Whoever loses this type of life has indeed lost all

² Surat Al-Jinn, Verse 16-17.

³ Recorded by Muslim in the book, “The Hypocrites”, (Hadith 64) and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/50).

goodness, even if he/she were to replace it with all pleasures of this world.

Disobeying Allah ﷻ has always been a reason for the removal of His Blessings, because Satan is associated with people who commit sins. It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ commanded His believing Servants to begin every action by mentioning the Name of Allah ﷻ; before eating, drinking, riding, having a sexual intercourse with one's spouse. Mentioning the Name of Allah at the beginning of every activity brings the Benediction of Allah ﷻ for His Servant, and chases away Satan; because every action which is not done in the Name of Allah ﷻ is denied any blessing from Him ﷻ. All blessings come from Allah ﷻ, and everything related to Him is blessed; His Word is blessed, His Messenger is blessed, His devoted pious servant is blessed, His Sacred House (the Ka'bah) is blessed, and the land of Palestine, within which there is Al-Aqsa mosque, is blessed. The opposite of a blessing is a curse, so every land, person or activity that is cursed by Allah is far from receiving any blessing from Him ﷻ, and anything associated with them is definitely not blessed. Allah ﷻ cursed His Enemy, Iblis (Satan), making him the most distant (from Him) of all His Creation.

Anything linked to Satan is cursed, according to the level of its closeness to Satan. It is from this perspective that we can perceive the effect of sins in wiping away any blessing in life, knowledge and activity.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “This world is cursed and so are all the things in it, except the remembrance of Allah, those things which He likes, scholars and students.”¹

Therefore, everything in this world is cursed, except that which is for Allah’s Sake, which earns the Blessing of Allah ﷻ.

Sins cast a sinner down to a very low state

Allah ﷻ created mankind two categories: He ﷻ made those people who obey Him highly exalted, and made those who disobey Him lowly degraded both in this world and the Hereafter. He ﷻ also made those people who obey Him the most honoured people, but those who reject His Commandments the most disgraceful people. This is highlighted in the Hadith reported by Abdullah bin ‘Amru ؓ in which the Prophet ﷺ said: “I was sent with a sword, before the Hour, until Allah ﷻ is worshipped Alone, without associating any partners with Him. My provision was made under the shade of my lance, and disgrace was set up on any people who should oppose my command; and whoever copies the manner of a people, is one of them.”

Whenever a person commits a sin, he/she is cast to a lower level, and he/she would keep on descending until he/she reached the lowest bottom; but whenever he/she does a good deed (obeying Allah’s Commandments, and fulfilling his obligations), he/she would keep on rising until he/she reached the highest grades.

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah ؓ.

During the course of his/her life, a person might experience ups and downs, with regards to the nature of his/her deeds (good or bad), so he/she would be cast according to the domination of one type over the other.

However, one should not misunderstand this statement, because there are situations when a person might go down a distance larger than that between the east and the west, because of one single misdeed; therefore, even if he rises one thousand grades up, it would not be sufficient for him; as reported in the Hadith, in which the Prophet ﷺ said: "A Servant of Allah may utter a word, without thinking whether it is right or wrong; he may fall down into the Fire a distance equal to that between the east and west."²

What kind of rising is necessary in such a situation?

Falling is inevitable in the life of man, yet there are people whose falling is the result of a state of carelessness, so once they come around, they quickly return to their high level, or to an even higher one, according to the sharpness of their wakefulness.

But there are also people whose falling is made intentionally, when committing a sin, whether a minor or major one; therefore, such people need a quick return to a pure and truthful repentance.

The scholars have differed regarding the level of a person after one repents from his sin; whether one returns to the

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah ؓ, in the book, "*Ar-Riqaq*", chapter 23; Muslim in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", Hadith 50; At-Tirmidhi in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", chapter 10; and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 231, 297).

level in which one was before committing a sin, by virtue of the fact that repentance wipes away all traces of the sin; or that one does not return to one's previous level, by virtue of the fact that the effect of repentance is in cancelling the punishment due for committing the sin; as for the level that one missed, one would not return to it directly.

The scholars have said it is like the example of two men climbing up two never-ending ladders. If one goes down one step, and then carried on rising up, surely the one who kept on ascending would always be above the other.

Shaikh Al-Islam gave an acceptable judgment regarding the two groups, saying: "Some may return to his previous grade, but others may not."

I say: This is according to the degree of perfection of the repentance, and the feeling of disgrace, submission and fear of Allah, which the sin has caused in the mind of the sinner. These effects may influence the repentant enough to allow him/her to reach a higher level, and even be in a better position, after his repentance, than his/her previous position, before committing the sin. Such a person benefits a great deal after repenting from the sin, as it made him/her acknowledge his/her status, and helped him/her to submit before his/her Master, seeking His Mercy and Forgiveness, in the most humble way possible.

Whatever blessings were bestowed upon him/her, he/she would then regard it as being too good for him/her (i.e. he/she is not worthily of receiving such a blessing); and whatever misfortune had occurred to him/her, he/she would see him/herself worthily of that affliction, because he/she

would admit that his/her Master had not given him/her a punishment equal to his/her crime. In fact, the punishment he/she deserves could not be carried by the mountains, let alone his/her weak body.

Meeting noble people after having committed an immoral or obscene act is very disrespectful but could lead the sinner to a state of shame; so what about having to meet Allah, the Supreme, Owner and Lord of the Heavens and earth?

If it were not for the fact that Allah's Mercy precedes His Anger, and that His Forgiveness precedes His Punishment, the heavens and earth would have been shaken to pieces because of the sins of His Servants.

Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿Verily, Allah grasps the heavens and the earth lest they should move away from their places, and if they were to move away from their places, there is not one that could grasp them after Him. Truly, He is Most Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.﴾**¹

Allah ﷻ concluded this Verse by mentioning two of His Attributes: The Most Forbearing, and Oft-Forgiving; and we should understand that without His Forbearance and Forgiveness, the heavens and the earth would not have remained in their places.

Allah ﷻ has informed us about the ungrateful and polytheistic ways of some of His Servants: **﴿Whereby the**

¹ Surat Fatir, Verse 41.

heavens are almost torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins)²

Allah ﷻ removed our forbears (Adam and Eve ؑ) from Paradise because of the sin they had committed, in disobeying Him. He ﷻ cursed Iblis (Satan) and expelled him from the heavens and the earth, and from His Mercy, because of the sin he committed (in not prostrating to Adam). As for us, foolish people, we build up a mountain of sins, and still hope to benefit from the eternal blessings in Paradise, despite being aware of the fact that our forbears were removed from Paradise for a single sin.

A repentant person could ascend to a better position than when he/she was before he/she had committed a sin; but in some cases, his/her sin could degrade him/her and weaken his/her determination, and so the healing from his repentance could strengthen him/her enough to regain his previous position.

This only applies to the case where there is a descent to a sinful level; however, if this descent is to a matter which violates the basics of his faith, such as suspicion, doubt or hypocrisy, then, in order to rise above this, a renewal of one's faith (Islam) is required.

A sinner is subject to all kinds of evil from devils because of his/her sinful life

Demons are encouraged to assault a sinner with different kinds of suffering; by deceiving, tempting, and provoking

² Surat Mariyam, Verse 90.

him/her with their devilish whispering, until he/she becomes devoted to his/her sinful activities.

He/she would also be subjected to more harm from the devils of mankind, who would keep on slandering him/her in his/her presence and absence, and everyone in his/her social life would look down upon him/her, because of his/her despicable and shameful life.

One man once said: “When I disobey Allah, I see it in the conduct of my wife and my animal towards me.” (Even animals change their conduct towards a sinner, until he/she repents!)

A sinner would also be subjected to the punishment of the ruler, who if he were just, would give the appropriate legal punishment, ordained by Allah ﷻ.

A sinner is guided by his/her domineering self to reach a state of self-destruction, because he/she feels compelled to obey its evil instructions; whereas obeying Allah ﷻ is the way to enter into His Safe Fortress. Indeed, by remembering Allah ﷻ, giving Sadaqah, enjoining good and forbidding evil one would be shielded from any evil inspiration. It is like the immune system, resisting any invading the body.

Good deeds and misdeeds are two opposites in constant conflict, so whenever the good side increases in power, one's resistance becomes stronger; for Allah ﷻ defends those who believe; and belief (faith) is expressed in both words and actions. Therefore, the degree of one's resistance is given according to the power of one's faith.

Sins prevent a sinner from perceiving his/her own benefits

Everyone needs to know what benefits and what harms him/her in this life. A person with such knowledge could control his/her own desires, and uses this for his/her own benefit.

Sins prevent a sinner from acquiring such knowledge, making him/her a victim of his/her own actions.

When one falls into a sinful situation, one is completely blinded as to a way out of it. One remains undecided, until one is overwhelmed, because one's heart is rotten with sins, as one's faculties of resistance do not function to save one.

When a sinner is afflicted by a misfortune, he/she becomes deceived, by his/her heart, tongue and limbs, as to what could save him/her from this trouble. His heart is not attracted towards relying on Allah ﷻ, in a state of submission and humility; his tongue does not obey him, in remembering his Lord, and if it helps him remembering his Lord, his remembrance has no connection with his heart. This is all due to the effects of sins upon the soul.

The matter is even more serious when a sinner's tongue deceives him/her in the crucial moments before death. Sometimes, he finds it difficult to utter the Testimony of Faith (the declaration: *la ilaha illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul Allah*), as has been witnessed by some people in different cases:

It was said to a dying person: Say: “*la ilaha illa Allah*,” but instead he started mentioning the moves of a chess game – which was his favourite activity – until he died.

It was said to another: Say “*la ilaha illa Allah*,” but he began singing, until he died.

The same thing was said to another dying man, but he replied: “What you say will not benefit me now, for I have committed all types of sins.” So he died without saying the declaration of faith. Another one replied: “This would make no difference, as I cannot even recall me performing a single act of Salah in my life.” Thus, he also died without saying it. Another dying person replied: “I want to utter it, but my tongue refuses.”

There are many examples of such situations when some people, in their last dying moments, were unable to utter the declaration of faith, yet could repeat only certain words from the activity for which they devoted their lives.

It is only in these moments that **﴿Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah will cause to go astray those who are wrongdoers, and Allah does what He wills.﴾**¹

How could one’s end be successful when one’s heart, which was made by Allah, remains heedless of His remembrance, and instead follows its own lusts and desires?

¹ Surat Ibrahim, Verse 27.

Allah ﷻ addresses those wrongdoers, who disregard His Prohibitions and insist on disobeying Him: **«Or have you oaths from Us, reaching to the Day of Resurrection, that yours will be what you judge? Ask them, which of them will stand surely for that!»**²

Sins blind the heart

Sins either blind the heart or weaken its insight, and therefore, the heart misses all the available paths for its right guidance.

Human perfection revolves around two cycles: discerning truth from falsehood, and following the path of truth. The disproportion of people's status, in Allah's Sight, both in this world and the Hereafter, is based on their differences regarding this issue. These are the issues which Allah ﷻ praised in His Prophets, when He ﷻ said: **«Remember Our Servants, Ibrahim (Abraham), Ishaq (Isaac), and Ya'qub (Jacob), all owners of strength (in worshipping us) and also of religious understanding»**³ i.e. owners of strength in implementing the truth, and owners of good understanding of the religion. Thus Allah ﷻ described them with the excellence of their perception of and acting upon the truth. People are divided into four categories, with regard to this issue. The Prophets of Allah remain in the top category, among the Creation of Allah ﷻ.

The second category is totally the opposite; those who have no insight with regards to their religion, nor strength in execution; this category contains the majority of people.

² Surat Al-Qalam, Verse 39-40.

³ Sād, Verse 45.

Their company attracts its followers by means of shame and disgrace.

The third category contains those with insight and an understanding of the truth, yet are weak and unable to execute the teachings of that truth. This is the case of the weak believer; while the strong believer is more beloved to Allah ﷻ.

The fourth category contains those with power and determination, yet lacking understanding of the religion, and failing to distinguish properly between the supporters of Ar-Rahman (Allah ﷻ), and the supporters of Shaytan (Satan).

Of all these categories, none is suitable to be assigned the *Imamah* (leadership) in religion, except the first category.

Allah ﷻ said: **﴿We made from among them leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and used to believe with certainty in Our Signs﴾¹**

Allah has sworn by time; the time of the losers and the winners in this life; that those without *iman* (faith) and good deeds are among the losers; He ﷻ said: **﴿By Al-‘Asr (the time). Verily, man is in loss, except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds﴾**. Allah ﷻ also added: **﴿Recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds, which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds, which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the suffering,**

¹ Surat as-Sajdah, Verse 24.

*harm, and injury which one may encounter in Allah's Cause).*²

It is known that sins blind the heart's insight, preventing it from perceiving the truth as it is, and weaken its determination. Its perception becomes so corrupt that it evaluates truth as falsehood and falsehood as truth.

Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Whosoever turns away, blindly, from the remembrance of the Most Gracious (Allah), We appoint for him Satan to be a companion to him. And verily, they (devils) hinder them from the Path of Allah, yet they think that are guided aright! Till when he (such a one) comes to Us, he says (to his devil companion): "Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts" - the worst type of companion indeed﴾**³

Sins support the devils against the sinner

Sins are tools of destruction from Satan which are used against a sinner; for Allah ﷻ has placed man in constant conflict with the devil, who never leaves him alone for a single moment. In fact, the devil can see humans clearly, but they cannot see him, and he never sleeps nor rests, until he corrupts them. He tries many means, including the support from other devils from among mankind; applying many types of stratagems and laying traps to ambush their enemy, who is man. Satan tells other devils to attack the enemy of their grandfather, Iblis (Satan), who was the cause of their grandfather's expulsion from Paradise, and therefore from the Mercy of Allah. So, he encourages them to tempt man to

² Surat Al-'Asr.

³ Surat Az-Zukhruf, Verses 36-38.

commit more sins, so that many of mankind may participate with them in their current miserable state (i.e. being expelled from the Mercy of Allah).

Allah ﷻ tested the Children of Adam with Satan, yet armed them with weapons, however He ﷻ also supplied their enemy (Satan) with soldiers, in order to establish a life of *Jihad* (struggle) in this world. Allah ﷻ has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties, in return for an entry into Paradise; they fight for the Sake of Allah ﷻ; they kill their enemy and get killed. He ﷻ informed us that this is His asserted Promise in His Books: the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an.

Allah ﷻ also said: **«O you who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) and that you strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives, that will be better for you, if you but knew. (If you do so) He will forgive you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwellings in the Gardens of Eden; that is indeed the great success. And also, (He will give you) another (blessing) which you love: Help from Allah (against your enemies) and a near victory; so give glad tidings to the believers.»**¹

Allah ﷻ set His Enemy (Satan) upon the believer, who is Allah's most beloved creature, because striving for the Cause of Allah (*Jihad*) is the most beloved activity in His Sight, as people who make *Jihad* for the Cause of Allah, are

¹ Surat as-Saff, Verses 10-13.

the most highly elevated, and the closest to Him ﷻ. So, He ﷻ fixed the banner of *Jihad* in the believer's heart, the place where there is knowledge, love, sincere worship, and reliance on Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ charged the believer with his fight against Satan, and equipped him with soldiers among the Angels, who never leave him alone: **«For him (each believer), there are angels in succession, before and behind him. They guard him by the Command of Allah»**². The angels allow him/her to stand firm in his/her fight, instructing him/her to do righteous deeds, and promising him/her the Reward of Allah ﷻ. They tell him/her: "Be patient for an hour, so then you may rest in peace, eternally."

Then Allah ﷻ supported the believer with His Revelation (His Own Words); so He ﷻ dispatched the Messenger ﷺ and sent down the Qur'an to consolidate other blessings bestowed upon men, such the intellect, knowledge and faith. Allah ﷻ ordered the Angels, who carry His Throne, to seek forgiveness for the believers, to protect them from all evil, and enter them into Paradise. He ﷻ will also protect them: **«It is the Party of Allah that will be successful»**³ and **«It is Our Army which will be victorious»**⁴

Allah ﷻ has taught His Servants the attributes they need in order to wage this war, and said: **«O you who believe! Endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and guard your territory, and fear Allah, so that you may successful.»**⁵

² Surat ar-Ra'd, Verse 11.

³ Surat Al-Mujadilah, Verse 22.

⁴ Surat as-Saffat, Verse 173.

⁵ Surat Al-'Imran, Verse 200.

The matter of *Jihad* cannot be fulfilled except by applying these four issues. Patience cannot be achieved except by enduring the devil and resisting all his temptations. Once one endures one's enemy, one needs to guard one's heart in case the devil's whisperings entice one, and so this requires guarding one's eyes, ears, tongue, stomach, hands and feet. It is through these parts that the devil may enter one's heart to corrupt it.

When the Prophet's Companions, who are the best people, after the Prophets and Messengers, and the most protected against Satan, left the mount which they were ordered to guard at the Battle of Uhud, the enemy surrounded them, so the worst thing happened to them (the loss of seventy Companions ﷺ).

The key factor which holds together these attributes is *taqwa* (fear of Allah).

Picture the scene of the two armies facing each other:

The king of the polytheists (Satan) and his soldiers approached and found the heart of a believer, sitting in his 'kingdom', surrounded by his 'soldiers', guarding and willing to fight for his sake. He (Satan) could not attack him directly, so he turned to his ways of trickery and deception. He asked who was the most special soldier for the heart. They replied: "It is the self." So he told his aides: "Enter upon it and find out its desires; promise to fulfil all its wishes, and lure it towards you with all types of passionate temptations, until it comes to your side. It is only then that you would be able to invade all the other parts (the eyes,

ears, tongue, hands, and feet, etc), and remain there to destroy its inner attributes, such as decency and modesty.”

“Once in his eye openings, prevent his eyesight from being a tool of discernment, by making them a tool of distraction and allurement. When his eyes take an unlawful glance, make it appear passionate and acceptable to him; for I have not corrupted the Children of Adam with anything more than his sight. Indeed, I plant the seed of passion in his heart, then I water it with a wish, and keep on making promises until his determination is strengthened. Once in control of his passion, I help him remove his sense of decency. You have to make him belittle his acts; tell him that staring invites you to glorify Allah ﷻ (saying *Subhanallah!*) and reflect on the beauty of His Creation. Tell him that Allah ﷻ never created the eyes for them to be kept closed, and whatever picture was made to be screened from people’s eyesight. If the person has little knowledge and a corrupt mind, then tell him that every picture is an aspect of the Truth, and a reflection of God, and so invite him to believe in ‘the Unity of the Deity with His Creatures’ (the doctrine of the extremist Sufis). If he does not accept it, make him believe in the doctrine of ‘the Incarnation of the Deity in His creatures’, for him to become a brother of the Christians.”

“Then control his ear openings and prevent anything, which might spoil your work, from entering inside, but make sure falsehood comes through; for it acts like light on the self. Select the sweetest and most magical words and mix them into the self’s desires, and then place them in the ear. If you sense a positive response, then send more similar words, but beware of any words of Allah or His Prophet that might infiltrate. If any of these divine words enter, you need to

hinder their understanding, by sending other confusing words related to their context. In this manner, falsehood establishes itself within the self, while the truth is regarded as a burden; not to be considered by the masses as important.”

Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿So We have appointed for every Prophet, enemies (devils) among mankind and jinn, inspiring one another with adorned speech as a delusion﴾**¹ Allah ﷻ named this “adornment” which is falsehood; because the devil beautifies speech as much as he can, injecting it into a deceived ear.

Then the devil says (to his soldiers): “Attack his tongue; it is the greatest opening. Let it operate with self-destructive words, preventing any beneficial words from being uttered, such as remembering Allah, seeking His Forgiveness or reciting His Book (the Qur’an). You have two great duties which you should achieve now:

First, to ensure that the tongue speaks nothing but falsehood, and you should know that whoever speaks falsehood is your brother and a great soldier among you.

Second, to ensure the tongue keeps silent in matters of the truth, and you should know that whoever keeps silent about the truth is your dumb brother. Have you not heard the good preacher among mankind say: ‘The speaker of falsehood is a speaking devil, while the (one who keeps) silent about the truth is a dumb devil’?

¹ Surat Al-An’am, Verse 112.

You should know that it is the tongue which has caused the Children of Adam to be cast deeply into the Hell-Fire. You have to help one another and lie in wait against the whole of mankind. Have you not heard my oath when I said (to the Lord): **«Because You have sent me astray, surely, I will lie in wait against them on Your Straight Path. Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them thankful.»**¹

Have you not seen that I have lied in wait against the children of Adam on all his paths, and whenever I miss a path, I try another one until I achieve my desire or at least part of it?”

The Prophet ﷺ warned against the stratagems of the devil, saying: “Satan has lied in wait against the son of Adam on all his paths. He lied in wait against him on the path of Islam, saying: ‘Do you embrace Islam, leaving behind your religion and the religion of your fathers?’ The son of Adam opposed them by embracing Islam. Satan lied in wait against him on the path of hijrah (emigration for the Cause of Allah,) saying: ‘Do you emigrate, leaving your land?’ But, the son of Adam opposed him by emigrating. Satan lied in wait against him on the path of *Jihad*, saying: ‘Do you make *jihad* and die, so that your wealth would be divided and your wife would be remarried?’”²

¹ Surat Al-A’raf, Verse 16-17.

² Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of *Jihad*”, (chapter 19), and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 483).

Then the devil gives his order (to his soldiers) to attack his hands and feet and prevent them from doing any damaging your work – such as enjoining good and forbidding evil.

Sins make the sinner neglect himself

When a person neglects his/her own soul, he/she corrupts it and destroys it.

If it is said: “How can a person neglect or forget his/her own soul? And if he/she forgets him/herself, what does he/she remember? What is the meaning of forgetting oneself?”

The answer is: “Yes, a person can seriously forget his/her own soul. Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Do not be like those who forgot Allah (i.e. became disobedient to Allah), and He caused them to forget themselves. Those are rebellious to Allah﴾**¹; when they forgot their Lord, He ﷻ forgot them and made them forget their own souls, as He ﷻ also said: **﴿The hypocrites, men and women, are one from another; they enjoin (on people) *Al-Munkar* (i.e. disbelieve and polytheism of every kind and all that Islam has forbidden), and forbid *Al-Ma'ruf* (Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and they close their hands (to giving alms). They have forgotten Allah and so Allah has forgotten them. Verily the hypocrites are *Fasiqun* (rebellious to Allah).﴾**²

¹ Surat Al-Hashr, Verse 19.

² Surat at-Tawbah, Verse 67.

Allah ﷻ forgets such Servants, by neglecting them and leaving them without any support, which results in their imminent destruction.

As for one's forgetfulness of oneself, it is the wasting of one's chances of happiness and success.

Allah ﷻ makes these people forget their self-defects and shortcomings, and their thoughts of removing them. He ﷻ also makes them forget the diseases and pains in their hearts and souls, which is one of the severest punishments from Allah ﷻ.

There is no greater punishment than forgetting oneself; neglecting the benefits and solutions, causes of happiness and refinement, and preparation for the blessed eternal life.

Whoever reflects on this issue would discover that most of people have truly forgotten themselves and wasted their opportunities with Allah ﷻ. They have sold themselves cheaply, for the sake of base worldly desires. However, it is in their dying moments that they become aware of their loss, and it is only on the Day of Mutual Loss and Gain (*at-Taghabun*) that a Servant of Allah is faced with the result of the pledge he/she had committed to him/herself in this world; for every person trades in this world for the Hereafter. The losers would be those who bought this worldly life for their chance in the Hereafter; they indulged in satisfying their lowly desires and were fully committed to the achievement of that end, saying: "Take what you see but leave what you (simply) hear about."

This is due to the weakness of their faith and their strong urge to fulfil their worldly desires. Allah ﷻ has said about such people: **«Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the price of the Hereafter. Their torment shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped»**³ and He ﷻ also said about them: **«So their commerce was profitless, and they were not guided.»**⁴

The winners are those who sold the ending with the everlasting, the mean with the priceless, the despicable with the great. They said: “What is the value of this world, from its beginning to its end, that we should sell our chance with Allah ﷻ and the Hereafter for it? What could possibly could a Servant of Allah earn in it, when in reality its time is as brief as a short nap? Allah ﷻ said:

«On the Day when He shall gather them together, (it will be) as if they had not stayed (in the life of this world and the graves) but an hour of a day»¹

«They ask you about the hour – when its appointed time will be. You have no knowledge to say anything about it. To your Lord belongs (the knowledge of) the term thereof. You are only a warner for those who fear it. The Day they see it, (it will be) as if they had not tarried (in this world) except an afternoon or a morning»²

³ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 86.

⁴ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 16.

¹ Surat Yunus, Verse 45.

² Surat an-Nazi'at, Verses 42-46.

﴿On the Day when they will see that (torment) which they are promised as if they had not stayed more than an hour in of a single day﴾³

﴿He (Allah) will say: "What number of years did you stay on earth?" They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account." He (Allah) will say: "You stayed not but a little, if you had only known!"﴾⁴

﴿The Day when the Trumpet will be blown: that day, We shall gather the *Mujrimun* (Polytheists, sinners, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) blue or blind-eyed with thirst. They will speak in a very low voice to each other (saying): "You stayed no longer than ten (days)." We know very well what they will say, when the best among them in knowledge and wisdom will say: "You stayed no longer than a day!"﴾⁵

The winners are, therefore, those who realise that the eternal world of the Hereafter, is the one they should strive to achieve. Indeed, every person views his/her own self in this life; some safeguard it and others destroy it, for Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Verily, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be Paradise. They fight in the Cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed. It is a promise, in truth, which is binding on Him in the *Torah*, *Injeel* (Gospel) and *Qur'an*; and who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice**

³ Surat Al-Ahqaf, Verse 35.

⁴ Surat Al-Mu'minun, Verses 112-114.

⁵ Surat Ta-Ha, Verse 102-104.

in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.﴾⁶

If you are interested in this trade, then give this price (be one of) **﴿those who turn to Allah in repentance, worship Him, praise Him, fast, bow down (in prayer), prostrate themselves (in prayer), enjoin (on people) *Al-Ma'ruf* (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained) and forbid *Al-Munkar* (i.e. disbelief, polytheism of all that Islam has forbidden), and observe the limits of Allah, and give glad tidings to the believers.﴾⁷**

Sins remove present blessings and block incoming blessings

The presence of Allah's Blessings is preserved by observance of His Commands; for every aspect of Graciousness is earned by obeying Him ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ has produced a cause behind and an obstacle to everything: a cause to enhance it, and an obstacle to cancel it. So He ﷻ made the reason for attracting His Blessings the performance of the Islamic obligations, but made the objection to receiving His Blessings the rejection or negligence of those obligations.

Sins keep the sinner away from the angel appointed to him

A sinner cannot get any help from his protector (the appointed angel) because he is kept far away from his Lord,

⁶ Surat at-Tawbah, Verse 111.

⁷ Surat at-Tawbah, Verse 112.

according to the nature of his sin. Even a single lie may keep him/her a great distance from his/her angel, and so he/she is at the mercy of his arch enemy (Satan). The Prophet ﷺ said: “When a man lies, the angel moves a mile from him due to the bad odour of what he had produced.”¹

Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Verily, those who say: “Our Lord is Allah (Alone),” and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): “Do not fear, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised! We have been your friends of this world and are so in the Hereafter...”﴾**²

When his Lord supports him, the best and most beneficial of Allah’s Creation would also support him; Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Remember when your Lord revealed to the angels: “Verily, I am with you so keep firm, those who have believed...”﴾**³

There is nothing ever more beneficial to the believer than the company of an angel, who is his/her supporter during his/her life and death, in his/her grave of isolation. He repels his enemy (Satan) from him, and promises him glad tidings, and urges him to keep believing in the truth. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Satan exercises his influence upon the son of Adam, as does an angel. The influence of Satan is that he the promise of evil and denial of truth. And the influence of the angel is that he gives the promise of good and the affirmation of truth. Thus he who perceives this (i.e. good promise) should praise

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi, on the authority of Abdullah bin ‘Umar ؓ.

² Surat Fussilat, Verses 30-31.

³ Surat Al-Anfal, Verse 12.

Allah but he who finds other than it, should seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the accursed.”⁴

When the angel is much closer to the Servant of Allah, he places the right words in his tongue, but when he is far from him, the devil speaks to his tongue. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah has placed truthfulness in Umar’s tongue and he utters it.”⁵

Sins keep the son of Adam away from his appointed angel, whose company and support would otherwise have brought him happiness. The angel defends the Servant of Allah and replies to anyone who abuses him. It was reported by Abu Hurayrah that two men had a dispute in the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. While one of them abused the other, the Prophet kept watching and smiling. When the other responded to the abuse, the Prophet ﷺ got up and left. So the man caught up with the Prophet and commented: “He was reviling me while you were sitting, but when I replied to some of what he had said you became angry, got up and went away.” The Prophet ﷺ replied: “There was an angel with you replying to him, but when you replied to him a devil descended.”

Some Companions said: “There are (also) those (angels) with you who do not leave you, so be aware of them and honour them.”

⁴ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Tafsir Surat Al-Baqarah*” chapter 35.

⁵ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/106).

Allah ﷻ said: **﴿But verily, there are angels appointed over you, in charge of mankind, to watch you; honourable, writing down your deeds﴾**⁶ i.e. be aware of those honourable appointed angels, and beware of exposing them to anything which you regard as too shameful among you. The angels are harmed by anything that may harm the Children of Adam.

Legal Islamic punishment

If the aforementioned punishments do not scare you, then take a look at the legal punishment, legislated by Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ regarding committing crimes:
Cutting off the hand of the thief of three dirhams.

Cutting off the hands and feet of highway thieves who attack those people whose blood and property are forbidden to violate.

Flogging a person for abusing another innocent Muslim, or for drinking wine.

Stoning to death, as a most horrific capital punishment, for having an illegal sexual intercourse (if the culprit is married). If the culprit is not married, the punishment is one hundred lashes and exile from his land for a year.

Capital punishment (Killing by beheading) for:

Having a sexual intercourse with a person one cannot legally be married to.

⁶ Surat Al-Infitar, Verses 10-12.

Refusing to perform the prescribed *Salah*

Uttering the word of *kufir* (polytheism)

Performing homosexual acts, or performing a sexual act with animals (killing both parties engaged in such acts).

And any other punishment which came in accordance with the nature the crime, in terms of its law of equality (*Qasas*) and as a deterrent.

Punishments of sins are either legislated or divinely decreed by Allah ﷻ

All punishments are in response to sins committed by a person, and these punishments are either given according to Islamic legislations or Divine Decree.

If the legislated Islamic punishments (*Qasas*) are implemented for a particular crime, then the divinely decreed punishment would be cancelled or reduced for the person who had committed the crime. Allah ﷻ does not allow both punishments for His Servant, except if one of them was not sufficient to remove the sin or its ailment.

If the legislated Islamic punishment is not implemented (i.e. in the case where the ruler does not govern by the Laws of Allah), the Divinely Decreed Punishment takes place; it could either be more or less punishing than the legislated one.

However, the Divinely Decreed Punishments are general, in the sense that a whole village could be punished if a group of

people spread immorality, while the rest did not enjoin good nor forbid evil from spreading in their society.

The legislated sentence is the punishment for the doer of the crime alone, whereas the Divinely Decreed Punishment is wide-ranging, as it covers both those who commit evil and those who try to remove it.

Allah ﷻ has defined a legislated punishment for each crime, according to its gravity. The sentences are: killing, cutting (off the hands), flogging. He ﷻ decreed punishment by killing for the crime of polytheism, adultery and homosexuality, because the first corrupts the religion, the second corrupts the lineage (kinship) and the third corrupts the nature of man.

Imam Ahmad said: “After the crime of murder, I do not know a more serious crime than adultery”, and he supported his statement with the *Hadith* of Ibn Mas’ud ؓ who said that a man said: “O Messenger of Allah, which sin is the biggest in Allah’s Sight?” The Prophet ﷺ said: “To set up rivals unto Allah, though He Alone created you.” That man asked: “What is next?” The Prophet ﷺ replied: “To kill your son lest he should share your food with you.” The man said: “What is next?” The Prophet ﷺ said: “To commit illegal sexual intercourse with the wife of your neighbour.” Then Allah revealed, in confirmation of that: **﴿...those who invoke not with Allah any other god, nor kill such life as Allah has made sacred except for a just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse, for whoever does this shall receive the punishment...﴾**¹

¹ Surat Al-Furqan, Verse 68.

The Prophet ﷺ mentioned examples of each type of these most serious crimes:

The most serious type of polytheism is to associate another god with Allah ﷻ.

The most serious type of killing is to kill one's child for fear that the child might share one's food and drink.

The most serious type of fornication is to commit adultery with one's neighbour's wife.

The adultery with a married woman is graver, in terms of its sin and punishment, than with a non-married woman, because it includes the violation of the sanctity of the husband and his intimate relationship with his wife, and it corrupts his lineage.

Committing fornication with a hundred unmarried women is less, in the Sight of Allah, than committing fornication with the neighbour's wife, for such an act is also a violation of the rights of neighbourhood.

The Prophet ﷺ said: "He does not enter Paradise one who does not save his neighbour from one's evils"² and there is no greater evil than having a sexual intercourse with the neighbour's wife; therefore the punishment increases according to the seriousness of the crime.

² Recorded by Al-Bukahri in the book, "*Al-Adab*", chapter 29, Muslim in the "*Book of Iman*", Hadith No 73, At-Tirmidhi in the book, "*The Resurrection*", chapter 60, and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 386) (2/ 288).

The Divinely Decreed Punishment comes in two forms: a punishment to one's heart and soul, and a punishment to one's body and property.

The punishment to the heart also comes in two forms: first, as pains which affect the heart; second, the withholding of substances which give life and refinement of the heart. The punishment to the heart is the severest of all punishments because it is basically a punishment of the whole body.

This type of punishment progresses and intensifies, moving from the heart to the rest of the body, just as body pains may move to the heart. When the soul is separated from the body, the punishment remains within the body, and is known as the punishment in the grave.

The punishment to the body also comes in two forms: a punishment in this world, and another in the Hereafter. Its severity and intensity depends upon the consequences of the crimes. There is no basis for evil in this world and the Hereafter except the sins and their punishment. Evil originates from the self and its misdeeds, against which the Prophet ﷺ used to seek refuge in Allah, saying: "We seek refuge in You (Allah) from the evil within ourselves, and from the evil of our deeds."

Seeking refuge in Allah is done against all evil; the evil of the self becomes manifested as evil deeds, which in their turn necessitate the appropriate punishments. The angels invoke the Mercy of Allah ﷻ for the believers, saying: **﴿"Save them from (the punishment of what they did of) sins, and whomsoever You save from (the punishment of**

what he did of) sins (i.e. pardon him) that day, him verily, You have taken into mercy”)³

This Verse informs us of the angels’ praise for the believers and their benevolence towards them, by seeking their forgiveness. The angels ask Allah ﷻ with His Vast Measureless Knowledge and Mercy to save the believers from punishment. Allah ﷻ is All-Aware of their sins and their causes, and also of their weakness before their arch enemy (Satan). Allah ﷻ is All-Aware of His Servants, whom He ﷻ created from the earth, and when they were in the form of embryos in their mothers’ wombs. He ﷻ knew that they were going to disobey Him sometime in their lives, but He ﷻ loves to pardon and forgive.

The angels invoke Allah ﷻ for the believers to enter Paradise, which He has promised them, and say: **﴿You are the Almighty, the All-Wise﴾**¹ i.e. the Source and the Cause of all that comes from the Perfection of Allah’s Ability and His Knowledge; for might is the perfection of ability, and wisdom is the perfection of knowledge.

With these Attributes, Allah ﷻ decrees, commands, forbids, compensates and punishes whomsoever He ﷻ wishes; the basis of Allah’s Creation and Commands are founded upon these two Attributes.

Punishments which Allah ﷻ has assigned for sins

Think of the punishments which Allah ﷻ has decreed for sins, and imagine that they may be applicable to yourself.

³ Surat Ghafir, Verse 9.

¹ Surat Ghafir, Verse 8.

This would certainly make you reconsider before committing any sin.

Among the Punishments of Allah ﷻ are: sealing one's heart and ears, keeping a screen over one's eyesight, locking up one's heart, overturning one's heart and eyesight; making one's heart heedless of remembering Allah ﷻ; the straying of one's heart away from the truth, and causing it to relapse. Indeed Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind.﴾**² This is not the perceptible blindness of the eyes, but is rather, in reality, the complete blindness of the heart, which prevents it from perceiving the truth. (Allah forbid!)

Allah ﷻ also punishes the sinner's heart by sinking it down to the lowest levels, without the sinner's awareness. He ﷻ turns the nature of such a heart into that of an animal, whereby the sinner acquires certain traits and characteristics of animals. This was the interpretation of Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah of the Verse: **﴿There is not a moving creature on the earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you﴾**³. He said: "Some of them assume the usual characteristics of lions, some of dogs, while others of pigs or donkeys, and so on." Allah ﷻ has likened ignorant (Muslim) people to donkeys, dogs or camels in different Verses of the Qur'an.

Allah ﷻ screens the hearts of sinners from remembering their Lord in this world, and will screen Himself from them

² Surat Al-Hajj, Verse 46.

³ Surat Al-An'am, Verse 38.

on the Day of Resurrection, as He ﷻ said: **﴿Nay! But on their hearts is the covering of sins and evil deeds, which they used to earn. Nay! Surely, they (the evildoers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.﴾**⁴

Allah ﷻ punishes the sinner by turning his/her life into a cycle of hardship and distress in this world, in the grave and in the Hereafter. He ﷻ said: **﴿But whoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Qur'an nor acts on its teachings), verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.﴾**⁵ A life of hardship was interpreted as the punishment in the grave, but this Verse provides a more general meaning, in this context. In fact, Allah ﷻ punishes whoever turns away from His Reminder with a life of hardship and anxiety, even if he/she happens to be enjoying the blessings of this world, as his/her heart was suffering from the destructive symptoms of feeling isolation and disgrace, and having false desires.

The heart and soul never feel serene unless they remember Allah ﷻ, as He Alone is worthy of worship. Allah ﷻ grants a good life to whoever believes in Him and does righteous deeds; He ﷻ said: **﴿Whoever works righteousness – whether male or female – while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a**

⁴ Surat Al-Mutaffifin, Verse 15-16.

⁵ Surat Ta-Ha, Verse 124.

reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. paradise in the Hereafter)»¹

Allah ﷻ has guaranteed for those people who believe and do righteous deeds, a good life in this world and a good compensation in the Hereafter; they are indeed truly alive in both worlds.

He ﷻ also said: **«For those who do good in this world, there is good, and the home of the Hereafter will be better; and excellent indeed will be the home of the pious»² and «Seek forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance, that He may grant you good enjoyment for a term appointed, and bestow His Abounding Grace to every owner of grace»³**

One of those who had tasted this grace said: “In this world there is a paradise like the one in the Hereafter; whoever enters it, has entered the Real Paradise, but whoever does not enter it, has not entered the Paradise in the Hereafter.” The Prophet ﷺ had mentioned this Paradise, saying: “When you come upon the Pastures of Paradise feed on them.” On being asked what the Pastures of Paradise were, he ﷺ replied that they were circles where Allah was remembered.”⁴

Do not think that the Verse: **«Verily, the pious believers will be in delight. And verily, the evildoers will be in the**

¹ Surat an-Nahl, Verse 97.

² Surat an-Nahl, Verse 30.

³ Surat Hud, Verse 3.

⁴ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Supplications”, chapter 82, and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 150).

blazing Fire)⁵ is specifically about the Last Day, alone; rather the first group are enjoying the grace in the three worlds; while the second group are suffering the punishment in the three worlds.

There is no better grace in this world than that of having righteousness of the heart and soundness of the heart, along with knowledge of Allah ﷻ, and devotion towards Him ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ praised Prophet Ibrahim ؑ saying: **﴿Verily among those who followed his (Noah's) way was Ibrahim, when he came with a pure heart﴾**⁶

A pure heart is that which is free of polytheism, hatred, miserliness and pride; that is free from any ailment, which might prevent one from devoting one's worship to Allah ﷻ Alone.

The purity of the heart is accomplished when it is free of five things: polytheism, which contradicts the concept of the Oneness of Allah ﷻ; innovation in religion, which contradicts the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ; desire, which contradicts the Commandments of Allah ﷻ; heedlessness, which contradicts the Remembrance of Allah ﷻ; and passion, which contradicts sincerity.

These five aspects are a cover from Allah ﷻ, and each of them is branched into many more elements. Therefore, the Servant of Allah is desperately needs to ask Allah ﷻ to guide him/her to the Right Path, in terms of theory, practice and willpower. He/she may know the details of the Right Path,

⁵ Surat Al-Infitar, Verse 13-14.

⁶ Surat as-Saffat, Verse 83-84.

yet may ignore them; and whatever he/she knows, he/she may or may not be able to implement.

Allah ﷻ guides to the Right Path by His Divine Decree, Commandments and Prohibitions. He ﷻ guides to His Right Path whomsoever He wishes, by His Mercy and Graciousness. But He ﷻ also removes from His Right Path, whomsoever He wishes, by His Justice and Wisdom.

Allah ﷻ has prepared the Right Path for His Servants, and invited them to it as evidence from Him and a justice. He ﷻ has guided whomsoever He wants among them to take the Right Path as a blessing from Him.

On the Day of Resurrection, Allah ﷻ will set up the Right Path for His Servants, which will take them to Paradise. He ﷻ will draw away from it whomsoever turned away from His Commandments in this world, but will help whoever observed His Commandments in this world to cross the Path. He ﷻ will grant those who believe in Him and His Messenger a light, which would shine ahead of them, and in their right hands, in the darkness of the Day of Gathering.

You can picture the Day of Judgment before your eyes, and think of the Wisdom of Allah ﷻ in the two worlds, and then you come to the certainty that this world is but a land to be cultivated for the Hereafter. The status of people, with regards to their degree of happiness or misery, depends on the strength, of their belief in Allah and their performance of righteous deeds, in this world.

Therefore, one of the greatest punishments for sins is the deviation from the Right Path, in this world and the Hereafter.

The degree of punishment differs according to the type of sin and its effect of corruption

A sin can be defined in two ways: turning away from a Commandment of Allah, or committing a prohibited deed.

Allah ﷻ had put on trial the father of the *jinn* and that of mankind for committing these two sins, which are divided into four categories:

- (1) Kingly sins: when a person assumes some godly attributes, such as greatness, pride, omnipotence, subjugation, highness, exaltedness, etc. he falls into polytheism, by associating himself with Allah ﷻ. This type is the most serious sin of all, because one tries to compete with Allah in His Attributes and His Sovereignty, which is unforgivable. Allah ﷻ said: **«Verily, Allah does not forgive that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives (anything else) except that, to whom He wills, and whoever sets up partners with Allah in worship, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin»**¹
- (2) Devilish sins: when a person imitates the devil with his attributes, such as envy, oppression, cheating, treason, enjoining misdeeds, forbidding righteous deeds, innovating in religion, inviting people to misguidance.

¹ Surat an-Nisa', Verse 48.

- (3) Predatory sins: when a person becomes a tyrant and acts oppressively towards other weak people, inflicting them with harm and suffering.
- (4) Animalistic sins: when a person becomes possessed by his passion for lust, which leads to adultery and immorality. This type of sin is the most common among people as they are unable to assume those kingly or predatory attributes. However, it is through this type that they aim to acquire recognition for possessing those other attributes, from the predatory to the devilish, then even trying to compete with Allah ﷻ in His Divinity and Oneness.

Major and minor sins

The Qur'an, Sunnah and consensus of Companions and Scholars have determined what constitutes a major or minor sin. Allah ﷻ said: **«If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall expiate from you Your small sins, and admit you to a noble entrance (i.e. Paradise)»**¹ and **«Those who avoid great sins and *fawahish* (illegal sexual intercourse), except the small faults. Verily, your Lord is of Vast Forgiveness.»**²

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The Five (daily) prayers, and from one Friday Prayer to (the next) Friday Prayer is an expiation (of the sins committed in between them), if major sins are not committed.”³

¹ Surat an-Nisa', Verse 31.

² Surat an-Najm, Verse 32.

³ Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of Purification”, Hadith 16, and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/400).

These expiating deeds have three degrees:

First, they are confined to expiating small sins, because of their weakness and the weakness in the sincerity of the deeds (i.e. not implemented with utmost devotion because of some slackness in the performance), and so they act like weak medicine, which is not very effective in resisting the ailment. Second, they resist small sins, and are not able to reach the level of resisting great sins.

Third, they are powerful enough to expiate small sins and still possess some power to expiate some great sins.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Shall I not inform you of the biggest of the great sins?” They said: “Yes, O Messenger of Allah” He ﷺ said: “To join partners in worship with Allah; to be undutiful to one’s parents, to give a forged statement and a false witness.”⁴

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Avoid the seven great destructive sins.” They (the people) asked: “O Messenger of Allah! What are they?” He ﷺ said: “Joining partners in worship with Allah; practicing sorcery; killing a life which Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islamic law); eating up usury (Riba), eating up the property of an orphan; turning one’s back to the enemy and fleeing from the battlefield, at a time of fighting; and accusing chaste women,

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 6, At-Tirmidhi in the book of “*Tafsir Surat An-Nisa’*, *Al-An’am*, *Al-A’raf*”, an-Nassai in the book, “*At-Tahreem*”, chapter 3, and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 201, 214).

who never even think of anything except chastity and are good believers.”⁵

Abdullah bin Mas’ud ؓ said: “I asked the Prophet ﷺ: ‘What is the greatest sin in the Sight of Allah?’ He ﷺ replied: ‘That you set up a rival unto Allah, though He Alone created you.’ I said: ‘That is indeed a great sin.’ Then asked: ‘What is next?’ He ﷺ said: ‘To kill your son, lest he should share your food with you.’ I asked: ‘What is next?’ He ﷺ said: ‘To commit illegal sexual intercourse with the wife of your neighbour’¹ so Allah ﷻ sent down: **﴿... and those who invoke not with Allah any other god, nor kill such life as Allah has made sacred except for a just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse﴾**²”

The scholars have differed over the number of the great sins: Abdullah bin Mas’ud ؓ stated: “There are four.” Abdullah bin Umar ؓ stated: “There are seven.” Abdullah bin Amru bin Al-‘As stated: “There are nine.” Others have said: “There are eleven, or even seventy...”

Abu Talib Al-Makki said: “I have gathered the statements of the Companions and found that the sins are:

⁵ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Al-Wasaya*”, chapter 23, also in the “Book of Medicine”, chapter 48; Muslim in the “Book of *Iman*”, Hadith 144; Abu Dawud in the book, “*Al-Wasaya*”, chapter 10; and an-Nassai in the book, “*Al-Wasaya*”, chapter 12.

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Tafsir Surat Al-Baqarah*”, chapter 3, and in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 20; Muslim in the “Book of *Iman*”, Hadith 141, 142; an-Nassai in the “Book of *Iman*”, chapter 6; and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 300, 431).

² Surat Al-Furqan, Verse 68.

Four of the heart: Worshipping others besides Allah ﷻ (polytheism); insisting on committing a sin; despair of the Mercy of Allah; feeling safe from the Plan of Allah (Punishment).

Four of the tongue: giving false witness; accusing chaste believing women; making calamitous vows; practicing sorcery.

Three of the stomach: Drinking wine (alcoholic drinks); consuming an orphan's property; consuming usury.

Two of the private parts: committing adultery; committing homosexual acts.

Two of the hands: killing unlawfully; stealing another's property.

One of the feet: running away from the battlefield.

One of all the body: being undutiful to one's parents."

Those scholars who did not categorize great sins have said: "Great sins are everything forbidden by Allah ﷻ in the Qur'an; while small sins are those forbidden by the Prophet ﷺ."

Others have said: "Any act which is ordained to be punished in this world or in the Hereafter is a great sin, and that which is not followed by a punishment defined in the Law of Equality, for example, is regarded as a small sin."

Others have also said: "Whatever act, resulting in Allah and His Messenger cursing its performer, is a great sin."

It was also said: “A great sin is everything mentioned from the beginning of Surat an-Nisa’ until the Verse: **﴿If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall expiate from you your (small) sins﴾**³”

Those who did not divide sins into small and great ones have said: “All sins – considering the fact of boldly disobeying Allah and rejecting His Commands – are great sins.” They justify their statement with the fact that Allah ﷻ is not harmed by the sins of His servants, whether they are small or great; they are all acts of disobedience to Him, and He ﷻ is not affected by them.

They have said that a person should not look at the smallness or the greatness of the sin, in himself, but should consider the Worthiness and the Greatness of his Lord, whom he has disobeyed.

Worshipping Allah ﷻ Alone

Allah ﷻ sent His Messengers, sent down His Revelation, and created the heavens and the earth in order to be worshipped, Alone. Allah ﷻ wants all obedience and invitations of worship to be directed to Him ﷻ, as He ﷻ is the One God, Who owns all things. Allah ﷻ has said:

﴿I (Allah) did not create the *jinn* and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone)﴾¹

³ Surat an-Nisa’, Verse 31.

¹ Surat Adh-Dhariyat, Verse 56.

﴿We did not create the heavens and the earth and all that is between them except with the truth﴾²

﴿It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof. His Command descends between them, that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds all things in (His) Knowledge.﴾³

﴿Allah has made the Ka'bah, the Sacred House, an asylum of security and benefits for mankind, and also the Sacred Month and the animals of offerings and the garlanded, that you may know that Allah has knowledge of all that is in the heavens and that is in the earth; and Allah is the All-Knower of all things.﴾⁴

So Allah ﷻ has informed us that the purpose of His Creation and Command is: that He should be known through His Names and Attributes, and that He, Alone, should be worshipped, without associating any partner with Him. He ﷻ wants people to act fairly among themselves, as this fairness is the justice upon which the heavens and the earth were established; He ﷻ said: **﴿Indeed, We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance (justice) that mankind may keep up justice﴾**⁵ The highest example of justice is Monotheism (Worshipping Allah, Alone), while the greatest act of injustice is polytheism, being the greatest of the major sins.

² Surat Al-Hijr, Verse 85.

³ Surat at-Talaq, Verse 12.

⁴ Surat Al-Ma'idah, Verse 97.

⁵ Surat Al-Hadid, Verse 25.

One should reflect well on this foundation, and know its details, in order to learn the wisdom of the Best of Judges (Allah ﷻ), in everything that He has Commanded to do as well as everything He forbade.

The basis of *Shirk* (polytheism) is certainly the opposite of *Tawhid* (Monotheism), and therefore *Shirk* is defined as the greatest of the major sins. Consequently, Allah ﷻ has forbidden the entry of every polytheist to Paradise. He ﷻ has legalised, for the Muslims, the blood, property and family of a polytheist, and they may even be taken as slaves. This is because they have rejected the Command of Allah ﷻ to worship Him, Alone.

He ﷻ does not accept any of the deeds of polytheists, nor does He accept any intercession from them. He ﷻ will not answer their supplications in the Hereafter, because they were the most ignorant of Him ﷻ, as they associated partners with Him, which was the worst act of injustice on their part, even though they were simply acting unjustly towards themselves.

Types of polytheism

There is a case where a polytheist claims that he/she only intends to honour the Majesty of God, believing that the Greatness of God requires that he should enter upon Him through mediators, just like visiting a king or president. The polytheist, in this case, believes that he/she should not offend the Honour of the Deity, but dignify Him, instead. Say: "I worship these mediators to get closer to God and enter His Presence; so, why does this Divine Decree bring His Anger and Curse upon me; sentencing me to live eternally in the

Hell-Fire, in the Hereafter, legalising my killing, and the possession of my family and property?”

Another question results from the above question:

Is it possible that Allah ﷻ could legislate for His Servants to approach Him through mediators and intercessors, as its forbiddance may be understood from Islamic legislation, or is it that such acts are also rejected by human nature and reason, and so Shari’ah should not allow it?

What is the secret to the fact that Allah ﷻ does not forgive any form of polytheism, among all sins, for He ﷻ said: **﴿Verily, Allah does not forgive that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives anything else, for whom He wills﴾**¹?

Consider this question well, and you will come to realise the difference between polytheists and monotheists; you will distinguish those who know Allah ﷻ from those who ignore Him; the people of Paradise from the people of the Hell-Fire. With the Success of Allah ﷻ, Who Alone guides His Servants to the Right Path, I say:

There are two types of polytheism:

- (1) That which is related to God’s Attributes, Names and Actions.
- (2) That which is related to worshipping Him and conducting oneself towards Him, even though in some cases, a person may still believe that God is Alone, having no partners to share His Attributes, Names and Actions with.

¹ Surat an-Nisa’, Verse 48.

The first type of polytheism is also divided to two types:

First, a type of polytheism called “*ta’teel*” i.e. a concept which denies God all His Attributes, like the case of Pharaoh, who said: **﴿and what is the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, *jinn* and all that exists)?﴾**². Allah ﷻ has also informed us about the polytheism of Pharaoh, saying: **﴿Pharaoh said: “O Haman! Build me a tower that I may arrive at the ways – the ways of the heavens, and I may look on Musa’s God.” Truly, I think he is a liar.﴾**³

This theological concept denies God His Supremacy, Perfection and Omnipotence over His Creation. It denies the purpose of a servant his/her pure existence, which is to establish Islamic Monotheism (worshipping Allah ﷻ Alone).

Second, a type of polytheism is of those who associate partners with Allah ﷻ, without denying Him His Names or Godship, like the polytheism of the Christians who consider God as the third of the three (in a Trinity), with the Messiah as a god, and his mother (and/or the Holy Spirit) as a god. There is also the polytheism of the Magi (Zoroastrians) who relate all good events to light, and all bad events to darkness. There are indeed many polytheist sects in this context, like Al-Qadariyah, which is another theological school of early Islam, who assert man’s freewill, and deny the Will of Allah in the actions of His Creation; the Sabians follow astrology, worshipping stars and planets, believing that they are managing the affairs of this world, etc...

² Surat Ash-Shu’ara’, Verse 23.

³ Surat Ghafir, Verse 36-37.

Another aspect of polytheism is in worship

This aspect is less serious, because it is manifested in the actions of those who believe that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah ﷻ, and that no one can harm or benefit someone, or give or remove something, except Allah ﷻ, Alone; however not all their actions are devoted entirely to Allah ﷻ. Their actions are divided between Allah ﷻ, themselves, the devil and other people. This is the case of the majority of people, and is the polytheism mentioned by the Prophet ﷺ in the Hadith: "Polytheism in this Ummah is more hidden than the creeping of ants." They asked: "How do we save ourselves from it, O Messenger of Allah?" He ﷺ replied: "Say: O Allah, I seek refuge in You that I should associate anything (in worship) besides You, knowingly; and I seek Your Forgiveness for what is beyond my knowledge."¹

Allah ﷻ said: **«Say: I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is One God (i.e. Allah). So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord»**² i.e. just as He ﷻ is the only God and there is no other god but Him, then likewise one's worship should be devoted to Him, Alone.

The polytheism in one's worship of Allah ﷻ cancels one's reward from Allah ﷻ, and one may even be punished for any act which is not performed for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, especially if it is an obligation (religious duty). Allah ﷻ

¹ Recorded by Ibn Hibban.

² Surat Al-Kahf, Verse 110.

commanded that all of one's worship should be performed sincerely for Him, Alone; He ﷻ said: **«They were only ordered to worship Allah, making their religion sincerely His»**³. Therefore, whoever is not sincere in his/her worship of Allah has certainly not acted according to the Command of Allah.

Allah ﷻ said: "I am so Self-Sufficient that I am in no need of having an associate. Thus he who does an action for someone else's sake as well as Mine will have that action renounced by Me to him whom he associated with Me."⁴

One commits polytheism by devoting one's love and honour to other creations, just as much as one loves Allah. This type of polytheism is unforgivable, because Allah has ﷻ said: **«There are of mankind some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals. They love them as they love Allah; but those who believe, love Allah more»**⁵. The people who adopt this kind of polytheism say to their gods, as they are gathered in the Hell-Fire: **«By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error. We held you (the false gods) as equals (in worship) with the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)»**⁶

Polytheism in people's words and actions

Some people fall into polytheism when their words, intentions and actions are devoted to other false gods, besides Allah ﷻ.

³ Surat Al-Bayyinah, Verse 5.

⁴ Recorded by Muslim in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", Hadith 46.

⁵ Surat Al-Baqarah. Verse 165.

⁶ Surat Ash-Shu'ara', Verse 97-98.

Polytheism in actions is manifested in their prostration to others besides Allah, making circumambulation for others besides Allah, kissing other stones, apart from the Black Stone in the Ka'bah (the Haram mosque in Makkah), kissing graves and prostrating to them seeking the blessings of the dead. The Prophet ﷺ cursed those taking the graves of prophets and pious people as mosques, to perform Salat there; so what about those who take graves as places of idol worship, besides Allah ﷻ?

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah cursed the Jews and the Christians because they took the graves of their prophets as places for praying.”¹

“Among the most evil people, to whom the Hour will come while they are still alive, are those who take their graves as mosques.”²

“The anger on those who took the graves of their Prophets as places of prostration was terrible.”³

“If any religious man died, amongst the people before you, they would build a place of worship at his grave and make

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Funerals”, chapter 62, 96; Muslim in the book, “The Mosques”, Hadith 19, 23; Abu Dawud in the “Book of Funerals”, chapter 72; Al-Muwatta’ in the book, “Al-Madinah” Hadith 17; and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/218).

² Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/195).

³ Recorded in Al-Muwatta’ in the book, “*As-Safar*” Hadith 85.

these pictures in it. They would be the worst creatures in the sight of Allah on the Day of Resurrection.”⁴

This is the case of one who prostrated to Allah at a grave; so what about the one who prostrated to the grave itself? The Prophet ﷺ said: “O Allah! Do not make my grave an idol that is worshipped.”⁵

The Prophet ﷺ strongly and vigorously protected Monotheism, and so he ﷺ forbade performing optional Salat, to worship Allah ﷻ, at the time of the rising or setting of the sun, to prevent it from becoming an act of imitation of those who worship the sun, at those particular times.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “No one should prostrate to anything except Allah ﷻ.”⁶

Polytheism in taking oaths

It is an act of polytheism to swear by others, besides Allah ﷻ. Abdullah bin ‘Umar ؓ said: “Do not swear by anything besides Allah, for I have heard the Prophet say: ‘He who swears by anything beside Allah is guilty of an act of disbelief (or of associating something with Allah).’”⁷

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Salat*”, chapter 48, 54, in the “Book of Funerals”, chapter 71; Muslim in the book of “The Mosques” Hadith 16; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (6/ 52).

⁵ Recorded in Al-Muwatta’ in the book, “*As-Safar*”, Hadith 85; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 246).

⁶ Recorded by Darami in the “Book of *Salat*”, chapter 159.

⁷ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Oaths”, chapter 9; An-Nassai in the “Book of Oaths”, chapter 4; Ibn Maajah in the “Book of Expiations” chapter 2.

It is also an expression of polytheism when one person says to another: "What Allah wills and what you will." It was reported that a man said a similar expression to the Prophet ﷺ, and so he ﷺ told him: "Have you made me a partner of Allah?" You should say: "What Allah wills, Alone." Everything in this universe operates according to the Will of Allah ﷻ, even though Allah has said in the Qur'an: **﴿To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight.﴾**⁸

There are other expressions of polytheism, such as:

"I rely on Allah and on you."

"I have none but Allah and you."

"This is of the Blessings of Allah and your blessings."

"I have Allah in the heavens and I have you on earth."

"By Allah and the life of so and so..."

"I swear by Allah and so and so..."

"I ask Allah and so and so..."

It is known that all such acts of worship, such as: reliance, fear, righteousness, repentance, taking oaths, prostration, bowing, making *tasbeeh*, making *tahleel*, praising, and seeking forgiveness, are the Rights of Allah, Who, Alone, should be worshipped and sought, for anything, by His Servants.

A man was brought to the Prophet ﷺ, after he had committed a sin, and when he stood before the Prophet ﷺ, he said: "O Allah, I repent to you, and not to Muhammad." The Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah ﷻ has made the truth known to these people."¹

⁸ Surat at-Takweer, Verse 28.

¹ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 435).

Polytheism in people's will and intentions

This is an example which has no limit, like a sea which has no shore; and only a few people are safe from it. Whoever seeks, in his/her action, other than the Face of Allah ﷻ, and intends anything else, apart from getting closer to Allah and asking His Reward, has committed an act of polytheism towards his Lord, in his/her intention and will.

Sincerity in worship means that a person should make his/her words, intentions and actions sincerely for Allah ﷻ. It is the pure religion of Ibrahim عليه السلام and the only religion accepted by Allah ﷻ from His Servants; for He ﷻ said: **﴿Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.﴾**²

The reality of polytheism

Now that you know the different types of polytheism, you should be able to perceive the answer of the previously mentioned question, and so I say, with success from Allah ﷻ:

The reality of polytheism is that of believing that the Creator could resemble any of His creation, or that His Creation could resemble the Creator. It is denying God all His Perfect Attributes, which He ﷻ has described Himself with, or has been described with by His Prophet ﷺ.

² Surat Al-'Imran, Verse 85.

It is a special characteristic of the Deity that He is Unique, in terms of possessing the qualities of giving removing away, of harming and benefiting. Therefore, it is an obligation to devote one's supplications, fears, wishes and rely on Allah, Alone; and so whoever tries to convey these aspirations to one of Allah's Creation, has associated that creation with Allah, the Creator; the One God, Who Alone disposes of the affairs of the universe! Among the requirements of the Testimony of Faith is that no one should bow down or lower his/her head humbly to anyone, nor supplicate to another human being, asking him/her to fulfil his/her needs; for only Allah is capable of fulfilling anyone's needs. Whatever He wills takes place, and whatever He does not will does not take place! None can prevent what He has willed to bestow, and none can bestow what He has willed to prevent!

One the characteristics of the Deity is Absolute Perfection, in all aspects, and this necessitates the devotion of worship to Allah, Alone.

People's status, with regards to their Lord, varies according to their utmost love and submission to Him, and this conforms to the standards of the *fitrah* (original pure nature) which exists in every human being from childbirth. However, the *shayateen* (devils) have endeavoured to change people's nature and corrupt their minds, so Allah ﷻ sent His Messengers with the Revelation to guide with His Light; **﴿Allah guides to His Light whom He wills.﴾**¹

Prostration is a special act of worship for Allah ﷻ, Alone, so whoever prostrates to others beside Him, has resembled Him

¹ Surat an-Nur, Verse 35.

to His Creation. The same judgment applies to the devotion of other actions for other than Allah ﷻ, such as: reliance, repentance, taking oaths, praising and glorifying, etc.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ said: ‘Pride is My Cloak and Greatness is My Robe, and so he who competes with Me in respect of either of them I shall cast into the Hell-Fire.’”²

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The people with the utmost punishment on the Day of Resurrection would be the painters; as it would be said to them: ‘Put life into what you have created (i.e. painted).’”³

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ said: ‘Who are most unjust than those who try to create something like My Creation? I challenge them to create even the smallest ant or, a grain of wheat or barley.’”⁴

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The most awful name in Allah’s Sight, on the Day of Resurrection, would be (that of) a man calling himself ‘Malik Al-Amlak’ (the king of kings).”⁵

² Recorded by Abu Dawud in the “Book Clothing”, chapter 25; Muslim in the “Book of Piety”, Hadith 136; Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, chapter 16; and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 248/ 376).

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Tawheed*”, chapter 52; Muslim in the “Book of Clothing”, Hadith 96-97; Al-Muwatta’ in the “Book of Permission”, Hadith 8; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 4, 20).

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Clothing”, chapter 90 and the “Book of *Tawheed*”, chapter 52; Muslim in the “Book of Clothing”, Hadith 101.

⁵ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 114; Muslim in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, Hadith 20, 21; At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 65.

This is the Wrath of Allah ﷻ upon anyone who tries to bear any resemblance to Him, in His Names and Attributes. Allah ﷻ, Alone, is the King of the Kings, the Ruler over all rulers. He ﷻ, Alone, rules over all of their rulers and judges.

The greatest sin is to have a poor opinion of Allah ﷻ

Whoever has a poor opinion of the Lord has indeed denied the Lord His Sacred Perfection, in His Names and Attributes. Allah ﷻ has promised a severe punishment for those who think evil thoughts about Him, when He ﷻ said: **‘for them is a disgraceful torment, and the Anger of Allah is upon them. He has cursed them and prepared Hell for them – and worst indeed is that destination’**⁶ and He ﷻ said to those who denied Him any one of His Attributes: **‘That thought of yours which you thought about your Lord, has brought you to destruction, and you have become of those utterly lost!’**⁷

Allah ﷻ also said about Ibrahim ﷺ that he said to his people: **‘When he said to his father and to his people: “What is that which you worship? Is it a falsehood – gods other than Allah – that you desire? Then what you think about the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)?’**⁸ i.e. what do you think he would do to you after you have worshipped other gods?

The true devout worshipper of Allah ﷻ is the one who submits to Him in complete humiliation; for Allah ﷻ, Alone,

⁶ Surat Al-Fath, Verse 6.

⁷ Surat Fussilat, Verse 23.

⁸ Surat as-Saffat, Verse 85-86.

deserves All Praise, Glorification and Adoration. It is a great injustice to devote such rights to other gods, besides Allah ﷻ. He ﷻ said: **﴿He sets forth for you a parable from yourselves: Do you have partners among those whom your right hands possess (i.e. slaves) to share as equals, in the wealth We have bestowed on you, whom you fear as you fear each other? Thus we explain the signs in detail to a people who have sense.﴾**¹ i.e. if one of you haughtily rejects allowing his Servant to become an equal partner in all his property, then why do you appoint My Servant to share equally that which is My Property; I am the Deity, to Whom nothing is to be attributed, besides Me, as that does not suit anyone but Me! Whoever claims so has not estimated Me with the estimation that is due to Me, and has not duly glorified Me.

Allah ﷻ said: **﴿O mankind! A similitude has been coined, so listen to it carefully: Verily, those on whom you call besides Allah, cannot create (even) a fly, even if they met together for the purpose; and if the fly should snatch away anything from them, they would have no power to release it from the fly. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought. They have not estimated Allah by His Rightful Estimate. Verily, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.﴾**²

Allah ﷻ also said: **﴿They did not make a just estimate of Allah such as is due to Him. On the Day of the Resurrection, the whole of the earth will be grasped by His Hand and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right**

¹ Surat ar-Rum, Verse 28.

² Surat Al-Hajj, Verses 73-74.

Hand. Glorified and Exalted is He above all that they associate as partners with Him.﴾³

Whatever exists in this Universe is weak before All-Mighty Allah; therefore, whoever associates anything with Allah has not estimated Him His Rightful Estimate.

Those who do not estimate Allah by His Rightful Estimate claim that Allah ﷻ never sent His Messengers nor revealed His Book to His Creation; that He ﷻ simply created them and ignored them!

Those who do not estimate Allah by His Rightful Estimate deny Him His Names and Attributes, such as Hearing, Sight, Will, Choice, His Elevation above His Creation, and His Speaking to whomsoever He choses among His Creation.

Those who do not estimate Allah by His Rightful Estimate claim that Allah ﷻ punishes His Servants for something they did not do, or have no power or effect over. They claim that whatever takes place is an act of God, and so a Servant would be punished for something he/she was forced to do by his/her Creator!

How could one imagine that the Best of Judges and the Most Merciful should compel His Servant to do an act, which is beyond his/her will and determination, and then punish him/her eternally for it? Allah is Above all their evil claims and accusations.

³ Surat az-Zumur, Verse 67.

Those who do not estimate Allah by His Rightful Estimate follow the Devil and make him equal to Allah ﷻ, in observing the qualities of Glory, Obedience, Submission, Fear and Hope in him (the devil).

Allah ﷻ said: **«Did I not command you, O Children of Adam, that you should not worship Satan? Verily, he is a plain enemy to you. You should worship Me, Alone; that is the Straight Path.»**⁴

The devil also invites the polytheist to worship him, claiming that he is an angel. Allah ﷻ said: **«The Day when He will gather them all together, then He will say to the angels: “Was it you that these people used to worship?” The angels said: “Glorified are You! You are our Lord instead of them. Nay, but they used to worship the *jinn*, most of them were believers in them.»**¹ Similarly, other polytheists worship the sun, moon and stars, claiming that they worship the spirits of these planets, which address them, and fulfil their desires. So as the sun rises, the devil stands with his horns appearing to be on both sides of the sun, and when the polytheists prostrate to it, they are in fact prostrating to the devil, and the same thing happens at sunset.

Therefore, whoever worships others besides Allah ﷻ has indeed worshipped Satan, including those who worship Prophet ‘Isa (Jesus) ﷺ and his mother, because it is the devil who commands them to worship them. Allah ﷻ said: **«On the Day when He will gather them all together and**

⁴ Surat Ya-Sin, Verse 60-61.

¹ Surat Saba’, Verse 40-41.

say: "O you assembly of *jinn*! You gained many followers among mankind." And their friends among mankind will say, "Our Lord, we benefited from one another, and now we have reached the term which You have determined for us." He will say: "The Fire is your home, you will be in it timelessly, forever, except as Allah wills. Your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing."²

This shows the reason for which polytheism is regarded as the greatest sin in Allah's Sight; it is unforgivable, unless one repents, and leads to eternal punishment in the Hell-Fire.

Pride is as great a sin as polytheism

Pride, with its consequences, remains a great sin opposing the purpose for which Allah ﷻ created His Creation, just as the greatest sin, polytheism. Allah ﷻ created His Creation and revealed His Book in order that complete obedience be devoted to Him, Alone. Therefore, He ﷻ forbade the entry into Paradise for polytheists and any of those who have the weight of a mustard seed of pride in their hearts.

A great evil

It is a great evil to give one's opinion regarding the Names, Attributes and Actions of Allah ﷻ without having any proper knowledge about them. To describe Allah ﷻ with anything contrary to what He ﷻ has described Himself, or has been described with by the Prophet ﷺ is also a great sin. It is the most degenerate thing to do to the Attribute of Perfection of

² Surat Al-An'am, Verse 128.

the One Who is the Owner of the Creation and the Command.

If such an act is issued out of knowledge, then it is an act of obstinacy, which is even more evil than polytheism in the Sight of Allah. A polytheist who still acknowledges the Attributes of the Lord is less evil than the one who denies the Lord His Attributes of Perfection!

The denial of the Attributes of the Lord is the ailment without a cure.

Pharaoh, the leader of such polytheists, rejected the statement of Musa (Moses) ﷺ, when he said that his Lord was above the heavens; so he responded, saying: **﴿O Haman! Build me a tower that I may arrive at the ways; the ways of the heavens, and I may look upon the God of Musa. But verily, I think he is a liar.﴾**³ Shaikh Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari used this Verse as argumentative evidence against all those who deny Allah His Own Attributes.

Deviating innovation is one of the greatest sins; and is more preferred by Iblis (Satan) than other major sins. One of the past scholars said: "An innovation is more beloved by Iblis than an act of disobedience to Allah; because one can repent from a disobedient act, but can hardly do so from an innovation."

Iblis said: "I have exhausted the Children of Adam with sins, and they have exhausted me by seeking forgiveness from Allah and testifying that there is no god worthy of worship

³ Surat Ghafir, Verses 36-37.

but Allah, Alone. On seeing this, I established among them sects (and heretic tendencies); so they commit sins and do not repent from them, because they think that they are acquiring good by their deeds!"

A sinner harms only himself; whereas an innovator harms himself as well as upon other people. The *fitnah* (test, trial, tribulation) of an innovator affects the basis of religion; whereas the *fitnah* of a sinner is in having to cope his own desires.

An innovator drives people away from the Right Path, whereas a sinner does not do so.

An innovator denies people the right way to the Hereafter, whilst a sinner is slowed down because of his sins.

Tyranny and Oppression

Tyranny and oppression are among the greatest sins because they oppose justice, upon which the heavens and the earth were established. Allah ﷻ sent His Messengers and Books in order that people might establish justice among themselves.

The act of killing unlawfully, without any right, is a great sin. Islam cites many examples of such evil acts, like the killing of one's child for fear that the child might share one's provision (i.e. food, drink, and money); the killing of one's parents who were the cause of one's existence; the killing of one's kin.

The grade of such an evil act differs according to the nature of the act itself; therefore, the person who will receive the utmost punishment on the Day of Resurrection is the one who killed a prophet, followed by the one who killed an Imam, or a scholar who commanded justice among people and invited them to the Path of Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ has set the punishment for the intentional killing of a believer as dwelling eternally in the Hell-Fire, with the Curse and Anger of the Lord.

The evil consequences of killing

Allah ﷻ said: **«Because of that, We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person, not in retaliation for murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it would be as if he had killed the whole of mankind; and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he had saved the life of the whole of mankind»**¹

This has caused some confusion among many people.

It is known that the sin of the one who killed a hundred persons is greater in the Sight of Allah than the sin of the one who killed only one person. Some people believe that the resemblance in the sin suggests the resemblance of the punishment; but resembling one thing with another thing does not suggest taking it with all its regulations. Allah ﷻ has said: **«The Day they see it, it will be as if they had not tarried in the world except an afternoon or a morning»**²

¹ Surat Al-Ma'idah, Verse 32.

² Surat an-Nazi'at, Verse 46.

and **﴿On the Day when they will see that (torment) with which they are promised as if they had not stayed more than as hour in a single day﴾**³. This does not necessarily mean that they stayed in this world only for that period of time. The Prophet ﷺ said: “If someone performs the *Isha Salat* in congregation, it is as if he had stood in prayer for half a night, and if someone performs the *Fajr Salat* in congregation, it is as if he had stood in prayer for a whole night”¹. He ﷺ also said: “He who observed the fast of Ramadan and then followed it with six (fasts) of Shawwal, it would be as if he fasted perpetually.”² And he ﷺ also said: “If anyone recites *surat: ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One﴾*, it is as if he had recited one third of the Qur’an.”³

However, it is known that the reward for the doer of such acts – as mentioned in the above Hadiths – does not reach the reward of the one resembled. If they are considered equal in reward, then the person who performs *Isha* and *Fajr* in congregation and stands performing the night prayer in between them would just be tiring himself all night, with no extra reward due.

³ Surat Al-Ahqaf, Verse 35.

¹ Recorded by Imam Malik in “Al-Muwatta’” in the “Book of Congregation”, Hadith 7.

² Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of Fasting”, Hadith 204; At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Fasting”, chapter 52; and Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 417, 419).

³ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 52; At-Tirmidhi in the book, “The Reward for Reciting the Qur’an”, chapter 10; Al-Muwatta’ in the book, “The Qur’an”, Hadith 17, 19.

If it is said: “Then where is the resemblance between the one who kills one person and the one who kills a hundred persons”?

The resemblance is in many aspects:

First, Both of them are disobedient to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, and are to receive Allah’s Punishment, and both of them have earned Allah’s Anger and Curse, and dwelling eternally in the Hell-Fire. The difference between them is in their punishment in their lowest levels of Hell.

Second, they both equally deserve being killed.

Third, they are both equally guilty in their willingness to kill unlawfully. Whoever kills a person without any right, simply for causing mischief in the land, can kill anyone just to take their property; therefore he is an enemy to humanity!

Fourth, Allah ﷻ has made the believers, in their mercy and sympathy towards one another, as one body; so when a killer hurts one part of that body, all the other parts of that body are also hurt. So when someone hurts a believer, it is as if he has hurt all the believers.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “No human being is killed unjustly, but a part of the responsibility for that crime is laid up on the first son of Adam (Qabil) who invented the tradition of killing (murdering) on the earth.”⁴ Although, this promise of

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Funerals”, chapter 33; Muslim in the book, “*Al-Qisamah*” Hadith 27; At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Knowledge”, chapter 14; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 383, 430).

punishment never came to apply to the first fornicator, the first thief, or the first drunkard.

The first polytheist would be rather more deserving of that punishment than the first killer, because he/she would have been the first to set the example of polytheism. It is for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ saw ‘Umar bin Luhay Al-Khuza’i receiving the greatest punishment in the Hell-Fire, because he was the first who changed the Religion of Ibrahim ؑ; as Allah ﷻ said: **﴿and do not be the first to disbelieve therein﴾**⁵ i.e. that people take you as an example – after you – and so their sins of disbelief would rest upon you. The same judgment is for the one who sets a bad practice which people followed.

Abdullah bin ‘Abbad ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “On the Day of Resurrection the slain will bring their slayer with his forelock and his head in his hand, and his own jugular vein meanwhile dripping with blood, and he will say: ‘My Lord, he killed me’, till he brings him near the throne.” People mentioned repentance to Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ, but he recited the Verse: **﴿Whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein﴾**¹, and said: this Verse has not been abrogated nor changed, so how could he benefit from any repentance?”²

Nafi’ said: “Abdullah bin ‘Umar looked at the Ka’bah one day and said: ‘How great you are, and how great is your

⁵ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 41.

¹ Surat an-Nisa’, Verse 93.

² Recorded by an-Nassai in the “Book of *Tahreem*”, chapter 2; At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Tafsir Surat An-Nisa*” chapter 15; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 240, 294).

sanctity; but the sanctity of a believer is greater in the Sight of Allah!”

Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Abusing a Muslim is *Fusuq* (i.e., an evil-doing), and killing him is *Kufr* (disbelief).”³

The Prophet ﷺ also said: “Beware! Do not renegade as disbelievers, after me, by striking the necks of one another.”⁴ The Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever has killed a person who has a treaty with the Muslims, shall not smell the scent of Paradise, though its scent may be perceived from a distance of forty years.”⁵ This is the punishment for the one who kills a disbeliever who is under a protection treaty; so what about the punishment for the one who kills a believer who worships none but Allah ﷻ?

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The passing of the whole world would mean less to Allah than the murder of a Muslim man.”⁶

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Oaths”, chapter 2; Muslim in the “Book of Oaths”, Hadith 116; At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Piety”, chapter 51; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 176, 178).

⁴ Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of Oaths”, Hadith 118-120; Al-Bukhari in his “Book of Knowledge”, chapter 43; Abu Dawud in his “Book of Sunnah”, chapter 15; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 85-87) (5/37-39).

⁵ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Jizyah*”, chapter 5, in the “Book of Blood-Money”, chapter 30, in the book, “*Al-Ahkam*”, chapter 8; At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Blood-Money”, chapter 11; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 373) (2/ 171).

⁶ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “Blood-Money”, chapter 7; Ibn Maajah in the “Book of Blood-Money”, chapter 1; an-Nassai in the “Book of *Tahreem*”, chapter 2.

The evil consequences of fornication

Fornication is a great evil which can destroy society. It is contrary to the benefit of the global values of preserving lineage, protecting chastity and the sanctity of individuals. It spreads animosity and enmity among people, as committing adultery affects other people's wives, mothers, sisters and daughters. It causes destruction to human society, and therefore comes after the evil of killing in terms of the grade of its evil.

Imam Ahmad said: "I don't know a greater evil after killing (an innocent person) than adultery. Allah ﷻ affirmed its unlawfulness, saying: **Those who do not invoke any other god along with Allah, nor kill such person as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse – and whoever does this shall receive the punishment. The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace, except those repent**”⁷ So Allah ﷻ has compared adultery with polytheism and killing people (without a just cause), and made the recompense for such evil act an eternal abode and double punishment in Hell, if the person does not give up such behaviour with sincere repentance, having good faith and performing good deeds. Allah ﷻ has said: **Do not come near adultery, verily it is a great sin and an evil way.**”⁸ This great sin is abhorred by common sense, and even many animals repel it, as it was reported in Sahih Al-Bukhari, on the authority of Amru bin Maymun Al-Awdy who said: "During the pre-Islamic period of ignorance I saw a she-monkey surrounded by a number of monkeys. They

⁷ Surat Al-Furqan, Verses 68-70.

⁸ Surat Al-Isra', verse 32.

were all stoning it to death along with the monkey who had committed unauthorised sexual intercourse.”

Allah ﷻ states that among the ways for a person to succeed in the Hereafter is to preserve his/her chastity: **«Successful indeed are the believers, those who offer their *Salat* with all solemnity and full submissiveness, and those who turn away from falsehood, and those who pay *Zakat*, and those who guard their chastity, except from their wives or the slaves which their right hands possess – for then, they are free from blame; but whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors.»**¹

As Allah ﷻ said, Man was created very impatient; he is irritable when evil affects him, and when good affects him, he is niggardly, except those whom Allah ﷻ has singled out, again, in the following Verse: **«those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts from illegal sexual acts), except from their wives or (the women slaves) whom their right hands possess – for then they are not blameworthy. But whosoever seeks beyond that, then it is those who are trespassers.»**²

Four ways through which sins may invade a person

Since the starting point for the evil of adultery is the vision, Allah ﷻ has commanded Muslims to lower their gaze; because evil starts with a glance, followed by a feeling of passion, then moving closer, and finally in committing the sinful act.

¹ Surat Al-Mu'minun, Verses 1-7.

² Surat Al-Ma'arij, Verses 29-31.

(1) Looking at the unlawful is the main way to generate passion, and so whoever abstains from it, has indeed preserved his/her chastity. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Do not take a second look, because while you are not to blame for the first, you have no right for the second.”³

The Prophet ﷺ also said: “A look is one of the poisonous arrows of Iblis (Satan), so whoever lowers his eyes from looking at a woman’s beauty, Allah would produce for him an act of worship whose sweetness he would experience.”⁴

The Prophet ﷺ also said: “Beware! Avoid sitting on the roads.” They (the people) said: “O Messenger of Allah! We can’t help sitting (on the roads) as these are our places where we chat.” The Prophet ﷺ replied: “If you have to sit, then pay the road its right.” They asked: “What is the right of the road, O Messenger of Allah?” He ﷺ answered: “Lowering your gaze, refraining from harming others, returning a greeting, and enjoining what is good, and forbidding what is evil.”⁵

Staring lies behind some of the main calamities which afflict mankind. Indeed, looking produces desire; desire produces thoughts; thoughts produce passion; passion produces will power which turns into strong determination, and ends up as an action, as long as there is no impediment. In this context,

³ Recorded by Abu Dawud in the “Book of Marriage”, chapter 43; At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 28; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 351, 353, 357).

⁴ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 323).

⁵ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Al-Madhalim*”, chapter 22; Muslim in the “Book of Clothing”, Hadith 114; Abu Dawud in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 12; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 36, 47, 61).

it was said: "Patience in lowering one's gaze is easier (to deal with) than the patience with the pain of the aftermath of that gaze."

(2) Desires and inclinations are the starting point of good and evil, and it is from them that will and determination are generated. Therefore, whoever controls his/her desires has indeed controlled him/herself; and whoever surrenders to his/her own desires, would be overwhelmed by them, but whoever thinks little of his/her inclinations, they would guide him to his/herself-destruction. Desires keep on approaching the heart until they become wishes, as Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿...like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing; but he finds Allah with him, Who will pay him his due. Allah is Swift in taking account﴾**¹

The most despised people, in terms of their determination, are those who turn facts into false wishes, and observe these in their mean lives.

These false wishes are damaging to man, as they generate a sense of lassitude and apathy, and produce a feeling of negligence, remorse and regret.

When the wisher misses the interaction of the truth within his/her body, he/she depicts its picture in his/her heart, and so he/she becomes contented with illusionary images portrayed by his/her own thoughts, which never brings him/her any real satisfaction in life. His/her example is like that of a person who is both hungry and thirsty, picturing

¹ Surat an-Nur, Verse 39.

images of food and drink in his/her mind, without having any food or drink to ease his/her hunger and thirst.

Accepting such a state of mind shows a low degree of the self esteem and is also a disgrace; because the dignity and purity of the self lies in rejecting any unreal desire or fantasy.

Man's desires may be divided into four categories:

Desires with which man attains worldly benefits, desires with which he drives away his worldly problems, desires with which he attains benefit in the Hereafter, and desires with which he drives away any harm in the Hereafter.

A reasonable person would not hesitate to prefer desires which would gain him/her the benefits in the Hereafter, by seeking the Pleasure of his/her Lord.

Such desires and thoughts are defined according to their priorities:

First, reflecting on the Revelation and understanding its meaning. Allah ﷻ did not send it down just to recite it. Rather, its recitation is just a means to enable a person to ponder on its context. One past scholar said: "The Qur'an was revealed to be implemented on; so turn its recitation into practice!"

Second, reflecting on Allah's Signs and using them as evidence to confirm Allah's Names, Attributes, Wisdom, Benevolence and Generosity, as Allah ﷻ has urged His Servants to reflect on His Signs and understand them.

Third, thinking of Allah's Beneficence, Forgiveness, Mercy, Patience, and bestowing His Blessings upon His Servants.

These three types of reflection extract from the heart: the knowledge, love, and fear of Allah, which may be firmly established by the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.

Fourth, thinking of the defects of the self and of one's actions. This thought has a great beneficial effect, as it breaks the self which commands evil, allowing one's heart to live in a serene world.

Fifth, thinking of the duty of time and its function, and directing all worries around it, to avoid wasting any fraction of it. In fact, all benefits are generated from time, and any wasted time remains irreplaceable.

A scholar Shafi'i said: "I have accompanied Sufi people and I have not benefited from them, except for two expressions: first, from their saying: "Time is a sword; if you do not cut it, it will cut you." Second, "If you do not occupy yourself with the truth, it will occupy you with falsehood."

A person's time is indeed his/her lifetime; it is a way leading to his/her eternal blessed life (in Paradise), or the way to his/her eternal tormented life (in the Hell-Fire). It passes by faster than the clouds move. Whatever time a person spends in obedience to Allah is indeed his/her true life, but whatever else cannot be regarded as his/her life; even if he/she has already lived it, his/her life could be compared to that of animals. Even a person performing *Salat* does not gain from his/her *Salat* except that which he/she remembers of it; therefore man's life is only that spent in obedience to Allah

ﷻ, and everything else is but the devil's whisperings and false wishes.

You should know that a desire in itself does not harm anyone; what is harmful is interacting or reacting to it. A desire is like a passer-by; if you ignore it, it will go away; but if you invite it in, it would bewitch you with its deceptive speech.

Allah ﷻ has placed two kinds of selves in man: a self that is commanding and a self that is peaceful, and they oppose each other; whatever is light for one is heavy for the other, and whatever satisfies one torments the other. An Angel is on the right side of the heart, while a devil is on the left side of it. There is an on-going battle, until the self completes its life in this world. All falsehood is on the side of the devil and the self commanding evil; while all the truth stays on the side of the Angel and the peaceful mind. The on-going battle is recorded, and victory is gained by one's patience. Whoever endures, shows patience and fears Allah would have a good ending in this world and the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ has decreed that there will be a blessed end is for the pious.

(3) Speech should be preserved and used only for what is beneficial. One should say only that which is beneficial to one's *Deen* (religion). One should think twice before uttering a word, and whether it is useful for one's religion or not; if there is no gain in saying it, one should abstain from uttering it; but if there is any benefit in it, one should not waste the opportunity of saying it. If one wants to give evidence about what is inside the hearts (of others), one should consider their expressions. In fact, the tongue reveals the condition of the heart, whether its owner likes it or not!

Yahya bin Mu'adh said: "Hearts are like cooking pots with their boiling contents, and tongues are their ladles. When a man speaks, his tongue scoops up what is inside his heart; sweet or sour."

Anas bin Malik ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "A man's *Iman* (faith) is not straight until his heart is straight; and his heart is not straight until his tongue is straight."¹

Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, a man is not a Muslim till his heart and tongue are submissive."²

The Prophet ﷺ was asked about the most common things which bring people into Hell, to which he ﷺ replied: "The mouth and the private parts."³

Mu'adh asked the Prophet ﷺ about a deed which could cause him to be admitted into Paradise and would keep him away from the Fire. So the Prophet ﷺ informed him that the root of a matter is Islam, its contours *Salat* (Prayers) and its peak is striving in the Cause of Allah (*Jihad*). Then he ﷺ asked: "Shall I tell you of that which is at the bottom of all this?" Mu'adh replied: "Certainly, Messenger of Allah." The Prophet ﷺ took hold of his tongue and said: "Keep this under control." Mu'adh said: "Shall we be called to account in respect of that which we say?" He ﷺ answered: "May your

¹ Recorded by Ahmad in *Musnad* (3/ 198).

² Recorded by Ahmad and Al-Bayhaqi, in *Shu'ab Al-Iman*.

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the "Book of Piety", chapter 12; Ibn Maajah in the "Book of *Zuhd*", chapter 29; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/291, 392).

mother lose you! Will people not be thrown face down into Hell only on account of the harvest of their tongue?"¹

What is amazing is the fact that there are cases where a person may find it easy to abstain from consuming *Haram* such as: transgressing, fornicating, stealing, drinking wine or looking at the unlawful, yet finds it hard to control the movements of his/her tongue, and you see him uttering words that invite the Curse of Allah ﷻ upon him/her!

Such case is mentioned in the Hadith of Jundub bin Abdullah ؓ who said: "The Prophet ﷺ stated that a person said: "Allah would not forgive such and such person." Whereupon Allah ﷻ said: "Who is he who adjures about Me that I would not grant pardon to so and so; I have granted pardon to so and so and blotted out your deeds (the deeds of the one who took an oath that Allah would not grant pardon to that person)."² So that devout man who had worshipped Allah ﷻ all his life had his deeds blotted out for a single phrase that he had uttered!

Reporting the same Hadith, Abu Hurayrah ؓ said: "The man uttered a single word which destroyed his life in this world and the Hereafter!"

Abu Hurayrah ؓ said: "The Prophet ﷺ said: "A Servant (of Allah) may utter a word which pleases Allah, without giving it much importance; and because of that Allah ﷻ will raise him to degrees (of reward); and a Servant (of Allah) may

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the "Book of Oaths", chapter 19, and in the book, "*Al-Ahkam*", chapter 2; by Muslim in the "Book of Oaths", Hadith 237; An-Nassai in the "Book of Oaths", chapter 7; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 176, 182).

² Recorded by Muslim in the "Book of Piety", Hadith 137.

utter a word (carelessly) which displeases Allah, without thinking of its gravity; and because of that he will be thrown into the Hell-Fire.”³

Bilal bin Al-Harith ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “A man speaks a good word, not realising its worth; for which Allah records for him with His Good Pleasure till the day he meets Him. A man also speaks an evil word, not realising its importance, for which Allah records for him His Displeasure till the day he meets Him.”⁴ ‘Alqamah used to say: “The Hadith of Bilal bin Al-Harith prevented me from saying many words!”

Anas bin Malik ؓ said: “When one of the companions died a man said: ‘Rejoice over his Paradise.’ But the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Do you say this when you do not know whether he perhaps spoke about that which did not concern him, or was niggardly about something which would have caused him no loss?’”⁵

Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or be silent.”⁶

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his book of “*Ar-Riqaq*”, chapter 23; Al-Muwatta’ in the “Book of Speech”, Hadith 6.

⁴ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, chapter 10, 12.

⁵ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, chapter 11.

⁶ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Al-Adab*”, chapter 31; Muslim in the ‘Book of Oaths’, Hadith 74; Al-Muwatta’ in the book, “The Attributes of the Prophet ﷺ”, Hadith 22; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 174, 267).

Abu Hurayrah ؓ also reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “A part of the excellence of a man’s *Islam* is his leaving alone that which does not concern him.”¹

Sufyan bin Abdillāh At-Thaqafi ؓ said: “I said: ‘Messenger of Allah, tell me something about *Islam* of which I would not be able to ask anyone other than you’. He ﷺ said: “Say: ‘I believe in Allah’, then go straight.” I said: ‘Messenger of Allah, What is the thing you fear most for me?’ He ﷺ took hold of his own tongue and said: “This!”²

Umm Habibah ؓ, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ, reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Everything a son of Adam says counts against him and not in his favour, except: recommending what ever is good, prohibiting what ever is objectionable, or making mention of Allah.”³ In another Hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said that when a man gets up in the morning, all the limbs humble themselves before the tongue and say: “Fear Allah for our sake, for we are dependent on you; if you are straight we are straight, but if you are crooked we are crooked.”⁴

The scholars have differed about whether everything a person utters is recorded or simply that regarding good and evil, with the first opinion being mostly considered, because

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, chapter 11; Al-Muwatta’ in the “Book of Good Character”, Hadith 3; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 201).

² Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of Oaths”, Hadith 62; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 413) (4/ 385).

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, chapter 63.

⁴ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, chapter 61; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 96).

Allah ﷻ said: **«Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready to record it.»**⁵

There are two great ailments related to the tongue; if a man is safe from one, he is not safe from the other; they are the ailments of “speech” and “silence”. One can be a greater sin than the other; for a man who keeps silent about the truth is a “dumb devil”, disobedient to Allah ﷻ; while the man who speaks falsehood is a “speaking devil”, disobedient to Allah ﷻ.

Righteous people are those who restrain their tongues from uttering falsehood, but loosen them to speak about whatever is beneficial for them in their Hereafter.

A person could come on the Day of Resurrection with good deeds, the size of mountains, yet they were ruined by his/her tongue; or a person could come with bad deeds, the size of mountains, but he/she would find that his/her tongue destroyed them with constant remembrance of Allah!

(4) Footsteps should be preserved in the sense that one has to use his feet to take one to where one should gain the Reward of Allah, not His Curse.

Since a slip is related to the foot as well as to the tongue, they were both mentioned in the Verse, as Allah ﷻ said: **«The Faithful Servants of the Most Gracious (Allah) are those who walk on the earth with humility and**

⁵ Surat Al-Qaf, Verse 18.

sedateness, and when the foolish address them (with bad words) they reply back with mild words of gentleness.)⁶

Allah ﷻ described His Faithful Servants with straightness in their words and footsteps.

The unlawfulness of illegal sexual acts

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The most common things which bring people into Hell are: the mouth and the private parts.”⁷

He ﷺ also said: “The blood of a Muslim man is not permitted (to be shed) except for of three: a mature adulterous person (who is or has been married), a person to be killed (in retaliation) for the killing of another person, and one who abandons his religion, separating himself from the community.”¹ This Hadith which relates adultery to polytheism and killing is similar in context to Verse 68 of Surat Al-Furqan and the Hadith of Ibn Mas’ud ؓ.

In the above Hadith, the Prophet ﷺ mentioned that which is happening in order of frequently, as adultery occurs more often than killing people, and killing people occurs more than apostasy. The Prophet ﷺ also moved from a great sin to the greatest; the consequences of adultery are evil, with regards to the well-being of humanity. When a woman

⁶ Surat Al-Furqan, Verse 63.

⁷ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Piety”, chapter 12; Ibn Maajah in the book, “*Az-Zuhd*”, chapter 29; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/291, 392).

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Dayat*”, chapter 6; Muslim in the book, “*Al-Qisamah*”, Hadith 25; Abu Dawud in the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 1; At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 15; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 61, 63).

commits adultery, she disgraces her husband, family and relatives, before people. If she should become pregnant and kill her child, she would have combined adultery with killing; but if she tried to relate the child of adultery to her husband, he or she would enter into her family as a stranger, and would inherit from them while being not one of them, and would stay alone with women/men in the family while he/she is unrelated to them. As for the adultery of a man, it also causes the mixing of kinship, and the violation of the sanctity of the woman, who would be liable to all sorts of evil consequences.

Some of the characteristics of adultery are that it enjoins poverty, shortens (true) life, darkens the face of the fornicator, and makes him become despised among people. Adultery corrupts the heart with worry, anxiety and fear. It takes the adulterer away from the angels, bringing him closer to the devil. There is no evil consequence greater than killing (an innocent person) than that of adultery. It is for this reason that Islam commands capital punishment for a mature fornicator, in a gruesome way. If any man was informed that his wife had committed a murder, he would find it easier to accept than if he was informed that she had committed adultery.

Sa'd bin 'Ubada ؓ said: "If I saw a man with my wife, I would strike him (behead him) with the blade of my sword." This news reached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who then said: "You people are astonished at Sa'd's *ghaira*. By Allah, I have more *ghaira* than he, and Allah has more *ghaira* than I, and because of Allah's *Ghaira*, He has made shameful deeds

and sins (such as illegal sexual intercourse etc.), done openly or secretly, unlawful.”²

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah has a sense of *Ghaira*, and Allah’s Sense of *Ghaira* is provoked whenever a believer does something which Allah has prohibited.”³

The Prophet ﷺ also said: “None has more sense of *ghaira* (self-respect) than Allah, therefore He has prohibited shameful sins (such as illegal sexual intercourse, etc.), whether they are committed openly or secretly; and there is none who likes people to repent to Him and beg His Pardon than Allah, and it is for this reason He ﷻ sent warners and bearers of good news; And there is none who likes to be praised more than Allah does, and for this reason, He ﷻ praises Himself.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, when giving a sermon for *Salat Al-Kusuf* (the Eclipse Prayer): “O followers of Muhammad! There is none, who has a greater sense of *Ghaira* (self-respect) than Allah, so He has forbidden that His Male Servant should commit illegal sexual intercourse or that His Female Servant should commit illegal sexual intercourse. O

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Marriage”, chapter 107, the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 40; Muslim in the “Book of *Al-li’an*”, Hadith 16-17; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 248).

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Marriage”, chapter 107; Muslim in the “Book of Repentance”, Hadith 36; At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of *Rida*”, chapter 14.

followers of Muhammad! If you but knew what I know, you would laugh less and weep more!”¹

The reference of this major sin in the sermon of *Salat Al-Kusuf* makes so much sense to whoever ponders well over it. Indeed, the spread of adultery is one of the signs of the destruction of this world, and is also one of the Signs of the Hour, as mentioned in the two *Sahih* books (of Al-Bukhari and Muslim): On the authority of Anas bin Malik ؓ, who said: “I will narrate to you a *Hadith* that none will relate to you after me, which I heard from the Prophet ﷺ. For I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘Among the portents of the Hour are (the following): a decrease of Islamic Knowledge, widespread ignorance (about Islam), a common drinking of wine, widespread adultery, and a shortage of men and increase (in number) of women so much so that fifty women would be looked after by one man.”²

It is part of the Pattern set by Allah ﷻ for His Creation that the prevalence of adultery invites His Anger which inevitably leads to the occurrence of His Punishment on earth. Abdullah bin Mas’ud ؓ said: “Whenever usury and adultery prevail in a community, Allah ﷻ orders its destruction.”

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of Marriage”, chapter 107, the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 40; Muslim in the book, “*Al-li’an*” Hadith 16-17; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 248).

² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “The Prophets”, chapter 1, in the book, “*Al-Fitan*” chapter 24; Muslim in the “Book of Knowledge”, Hadith 8-9; At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Al-Fitan*” chapter 24; Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 387, 406) (3/ 108, 150) (6/ 381).

Allah ﷻ has assigned three stipulations for the punishment of adultery:

First, killing in the most horrible manner (for married adulterers), and the flogging (eighty lashes) as a corporal punishment, and exile for a year as a mental punishment.

Second, Allah ﷻ has forbidden His Servants to feel pity for the adulterers, a fact which would prevent them from afflicting the prescribed punishment for them. Allah ﷻ is more Merciful than His Servants, and His Mercy did not prevent Him from prescribing such a punishment for adulterers. Therefore, His Servants should not yield to the mercy within their hearts and abolish this punishment.

Third, Allah ﷻ has ordered that the execution of the punishment be done in public, in the presence of the faithful. This is for the benefit of teaching others a lesson, so that they would think twice before committing such an evil illegal act.

The punishment of the married adulterer is derived from the punishment set by Allah ﷻ for the people of Lut (Lot) (i.e. stoning to death), because adultery and homosexuality are both illegal sexual acts. They both have evil consequences which oppose the Wisdom of Allah ﷻ in His Creation and His Command.

There are so many evil consequences of homosexuality that they cannot be counted. It is better for a sodomiser to be killed than to go on to commit another homosexual act, because it is such an evil act that it corrupts him in a manner

that no good could ever be hoped for from him; he loses all sense of modesty and his soul becomes poisoned with evil. People have differed as to whether or not such person would enter Paradise.

Those who say that he would never enter Paradise argue their claim with the following different opinions:

That the Prophet ﷺ said: "A child of adultery does not enter Paradise."³ They say that this is the case of a child of adultery; he/she is a source of evil because he/she is created from an illegal sperm, even if he/she is innocent of that act. Therefore, the sodomised (or sodomiser) is even more evil than the child born of adultery; he is more likely to attract nothing but wickedness, because he took part in an evil illegal act; besides that, he would never be supported by Allah ﷻ to fulfil any good deed, nor acquire any beneficial knowledge, nor achieve pure repentance.

However, after carefully studying this matter, we could say: "If a person who is afflicted with this evil ailment gives it up and seeks pure repentance, and changes his bad deeds for good deeds, and washes his disgrace away with all kinds of obedient acts to Allah ﷻ, with sincerity and good faith, then such a person would be forgiven by Allah ﷻ, and would become one of the people of Paradise, because Allah ﷻ forgives all sins."

If repentance wipes away every sin, even polytheism, killing of Prophets, sorcery, etc, then it would not be short of wiping

³ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 203), Darimi in the book, "*Al-Ashribah*", chapter 5.

away this sin (homosexuality). Indeed, the wisdom of Allah has been established with justice, as it states that: "A person who repents from a sin is like one who has no sin."¹ Allah ﷻ has guaranteed to those who repent from polytheism, killing (a person), or adultery, that He ﷻ would change their bad deeds for good deeds; as He ﷻ has said: **﴿O My Servants who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Do not despair of the Mercy of Allah, verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾**² Therefore, no sin is singled out from this generality; yet this only applies to the repentant.

A homosexual who carries on into his older life to be more evil than when he was younger, would never be successful and thus achieve pure repentance, regaining whatever good had passed him in his life. Allah would not change his bad deeds into good ones, because he would not be supported so as to savour a good ending, by being allowed entry into Paradise. But rather all this is a punishment for him by Allah ﷻ, as all his evil deeds would be added together to increase his punishment.

When you look at the case of many dying people (people in the throes of death), you may see that they are prevented from achieving a good ending, (i.e. they fail to utter the testimony of faith – *la ilaha illa Allah, Muhammad rasul Allah*), as a punishment for their constant evil deeds!

¹ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, "*Az-Zuhd*", chapter 30.

² Surat az-Zumar, Verse 35.

Once, Sufyan Ath-Thawri wept all night, and in the morning, it was said to him: “Is all this because you are worried about sins?” Then he took a handful of dust and said: “Sins are of less value than this. But rather, I weep for fear of a bad ending!”

This is the greatest example of good understanding in *Islam*; that a man fears that his sins may betray him in his dying moments, standing between him and a good ending!

Imam Ahmad reported that when Abu Darda' ؓ was dying, he used to go unconscious and when he came around, he would recite: **﴿We shall turn their hearts and eyes away from guidance as they refused to believe therein for the first time, and We shall leave them in their trespass to wander blindly.﴾**³

Imam Ahmad said: “One should know that the bad ending – we seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from it – does not occur to those whose life was righteous. Rather, it happens to those who insist on disobeying Allah ﷻ and do not hesitate to commit all kinds of evil deeds. Such people are overwhelmed by their own wickedness, until they are over taken by death, before having had any chance to repent.

The punishment for homosexuality

Since homosexuality is one of the most evil deeds, its prescribed punishment is one of the greatest punishments, both in this world and the Hereafter.

³ Surat Al-An'am, Verse 110.

The scholars have differed as to whether its punishment is greater and more severe than that of adultery, or that they are similar.

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, Ali bin Abi Talib, Khalid bin Al-Waleed, Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr, Abdullah bin Abbas, Jabir bin Zayd, Abdullah bin ‘Umar, Az-Zuhari, Rabee’ah bin Abi Abdir-Rahman, Malik, Ishaq bin Rahawayh, Imam Ahmad and Shafii all stated that the punishment for homosexuality should be harsher than that of adultery, that is killing, in any case.

‘Ata’ bin Abi Rabah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Sa’id bin Al-Musayyib, Ibrahim An-Nakha’i, Qatadah, AL-Awza’i, Shafii (his second opinion), Imam Ahmad (his second opinion), Abu Yusuf and Muhammad all stated that the punishment for homosexuality should be similar to that of adultery.

Al-Hakim and Abu Haneefah have stated that the punishment for homosexuality should not go beyond censuring and chastisement, and have argued their opinion on the fact that Allah ﷻ or His Prophet ﷺ did not set a prescribed punishment for such evil act, and that it is an act which is neither favoured nor desired by human nature. They have claimed that it is for this reason that Allah ﷻ prescribed a punishment for adultery, theft, drinking wine, yet never prescribed a punishment for such abnormal acts as eating the dead, drinking blood, or eating pork.

However, those who hold the first opinion – which is the opinion of the majority of the scholars and represents the overall opinion of the Companions – have said: “There is no greater evil deed than that of homosexuality; it comes after

polytheism and also, perhaps, that of killing,” as we shall clarify, *inshallah*.

They said: “Allah ﷻ never tested any nation in the world, before the nation of Lot, with this great sin, then punished them in a manner not witnessed by any other nation before. Allah ﷻ combined several calamities in their destruction: He ﷻ over turned their village and rained down stones upon them, in a well ordered way, each one being destined for each and every individual among them. This was the severe punishment for the people in the towns of Sodom and Gomorah for their evil crime; for angels even flee to remote areas of this universe for fear that the punishment, set for those evil people, might touch them. The earth moans and complains to its Lord, and the mountains nearly move away from their set positions, when a homosexual act is committed.

The authentic Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, which the Companions ﷺ put into practice, stated that a homosexual’s punishment is death. It is confirmed that Khalid bin Al-Waleed ﷺ found a homosexual man in the countryside (the narration says: ‘a man on whom a sexual act is practised in the manner (normally) practised on women’), and wrote to Abu Bakr ﷺ. The latter sought the opinions of the other Companions ﷺ, of whom Ali bin Abi Talib ﷺ had the harshest opinion, saying: “No nation has done such an act except one, and you know what Allah ﷻ had done to them. I think he should be thrown into a fire.” So Abu Bakr ﷺ wrote to Khalid (explaining this) and he had him burnt.”

Abdullah bin Abbas ﷺ said: “One should look for the highest building in the village and throw the homosexual

from its summit, face down, followed by stones.” Abdullah bin Abbas ؓ derived this punishment from that which Allah ﷻ had given to the people of Lot. It was also Abdullah bin Abbas who reported the Hadith in which the Prophet ﷺ said: “If you find anyone doing as Lot’s people did, kill the one who performs it as well as the one to whom it is done.”¹

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah has cursed the one who does the act of Lot’s people. Allah has cursed the one who does the act of Lot’s people. Allah has cursed the one who does the act of Lot’s people.”²

The Prophet ﷺ never cursed the adulterer three times, and never cursed those who do other great sins three times, in one Hadith. However, he ﷺ uttered the curse on the homosexuals three times to put an emphasis on the greatness of their sin!

Allah ﷻ said about adultery: **«Do not come near adultery; it is a great sin and an evil way»**³ and about homosexuality, in the words of Lut ؑ: **«Do you commit the worst sin that none preceding you has committed in the ‘Alamin (the world of mankind and jinn)?»**⁴ We notice that Allah ﷻ used an indefinite noun to refer to adultery, as a sin among others, yet He ﷻ used the definite article to refer to homosexuality to show the full meaning of this sin.

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 24; Ibn Maajah in the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 12.

² Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 309, 317).

³ Surat Al-Isra’, Verse 32.

⁴ Surat Al-A’raf, Verse 80.

Allah ﷻ confirmed the evil of such an act in the fact that no other nation had done it before Lot's people, saying: **«none preceding you has committed in the 'Alamin»** and described it in a manner which is revolts and disgusts the hearts and human nature, saying: **«Verily, you practice your lust on men (instead of women)»**⁵. Thus, this reveals the nature of their need for pure satisfaction of their lust, which is opposed to the reason for which men incline towards women – i.e. sexual satisfaction, the attainment of love and mercy among married couples, procreation which preserves the most dignified of all creations (mankind), safeguarding women, etc...

Homosexuals have changed the natural way in which Allah ﷻ created men – i.e. to have passion for women and not men. They go against this nature and prefer to satisfy themselves with men, and so Allah ﷻ turned their dwellings and their hearts up on them; turning their town upside down, and sending them to an ever lasting punishment.

Allah ﷻ impeached them with transgression: **«But you are a people transgressing beyond bounds»**⁶, and described them, in another Verse⁷, as a people given to evil.

When those homosexuals came running to Lot عليه السلام, asking him to provide access to his (two) good looking guests, he told them: **«O my people! Here are my daughters; they are purer for you (if you marry them lawfully)»**⁸. He عليه السلام offered to marry them to his daughters for fear of the

⁵ Surat Al-A'raf, Verse 81.

⁶ Surat Al-A'raf, Verse 81.

⁷ Surat Al-Anbiya', Verse 74.

⁸ Surat Hud, Verse 78.

disgrace that would have been brought upon him and his guests: **«So fear Allah and do not disgrace me with regard to my guests! Is there not among you a single right-minded man?»** They replied, stubbornly: **«Surely, you know that we have neither any desire nor need of your daughters, and indeed you know well what we want!»**⁹. So he ﷺ said, in a very distressful manner: **«“Would that I had the strength to overpower you, or that I could betake myself to some powerful support”»**¹⁰. In that distressful moment, the Messengers of Allah (the two angels who were sent as guests by Allah) revealed to him their true nature and the reason for their visit. They informed him that his evil people would neither be able to reach them nor him, saying **«“O Lot! Verily, we are the messengers from your Lord! They shall not reach you!”»**¹. They gave him the glad tiding of the punishment set for his evil people, telling him: **«“So travel with your family in a part of the night, and let not any of you look back; but your wife (will remain behind), verily, the punishment which will afflict them, will afflict her. Indeed, morning is their appointed time. Is not the morning near?”»**¹

When their appointed time came, all their dwellings were uprooted and raised up into the sky, until the angels heard the barking of their dogs and the braying of their donkeys, and the Command of Allah ﷻ went to His Messenger and Angel, Gabriel ﷺ, who turned them upside down and then rained down upon them stones of baked clay.

⁹ Surat Hud, Verse 79.

¹⁰ Surat Hud, Verse 80.

¹ Surat Hud, Verse 81.

¹ Surat Hud, Verse 81.

This punishment was made as a sign for mankind, a lesson for those mindful of Allah ﷻ, and an exemplary punishment for those who share their transgression.

Therefore, all the passions and satisfactions have gone, leaving just sorrow and torment. Their lustful satisfaction was short-lived but their punishment eternal.

They were addicted to their lust, but when they came around, they found themselves in the land of punishment, in the place where regret was of no benefit to them. While they are being tortured in the Hell-Fire, it is said to them: **“You taste therein its heat and whether you are patient of it or impatient of it, it is all the same... you are only being requited for what you used to do.”**²

The punishment for performing a sexual act on animals

The scholars have three opinions regarding this matter:

First, the doer of such act should be disciplined, without receiving any corporal punishment, which is the opinion of Malik, Abu Haneefah, and Shafii in one of his two opinions. Second, its ruling is that of the adulterer; to be flogged if he is unmarried, and stoned to death if he is married; which was the opinion of Al-Hasan.

Third, its ruling is that of the homosexual, which was the opinion of Imam Ahmad. So the punishment is either irrevocable killing or the set punishment as given to an adulterer.

² Surat At-Tur, Verse 16.

Those who have said that his punishment should be capital punishment have argued their case with the Hadith reported by Abu Dawud, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Kill whoever has sexual intercourse with an animal, and kill the animal with him.”³

They said that since it is an illegal sexual act, its punishment should be like that of a homosexual. Those who did not consider any prescribed punishment for it have stated that the above Hadith is weak, and that if it were authentic, they would have explained this differently.

Isma’il bin Sa’id Al-Shalanji said: “I asked Ahmad about the one who had sexual intercourse with an animal, but he did not have any opinion. He could not confirm the Hadith of ‘Amru bin Abi ‘Amru (who reported from Ibn ‘Abbas).”

Tahawi has stated: “This Hadith is weak, and Ibn ‘Abbas had already given his opinion that there is no prescribed punishment for the one who had sexual intercourse with an animal.” Abu Dawud said that Ibn ‘Abbas’s opinion weakens this Hadith.

There is no doubt that the natural reprimand of having sexual intercourse with an animal is stronger than that of homosexuality, yet it does not mean that both acts are considered the same, regarding people’s nature; in fact, relating one to the other is a wrong way to conduct comparative evaluation.

³ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 23-24, Abu Dawud in the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 108, Ibn Maajah in the “Book of *Hudud*”, chapter 13, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 217 269).

Comparing homosexuality to lesbianism

It is wrong to compare a lesbian act to a homosexual one, because there is no definite sexual intercourse in a lesbian act (no insertion of an organ in the private part). It was reported in a Hadith that “if a woman has a sexual act with another woman, they are both adulterers.” However, there is no prescribed punishment for such an act, because there is no “insertion”, while the act is referred to as an act of fornication in its broadest sense, such as: the fornication of the eyes, hands, feet or mouth.

If it is confirmed, then the Muslim scholars are in agreement that the judgment regarding homosexuality with a slave is the same as the judgment regarding any other person, and so whoever thinks it is lawful to perform a homosexual act with one’s slave, using, as an argument, Allah’s Saying: **﴿Except from their wives or (the slaves) that their right hands possess – for then, they are free from blame﴾**¹ has simply compared his evil act with his right to have sexual intercourse with his slave-girl. Thus he is indeed a disbeliever, who should be given the right to repent, just like that of the apostate, but if he does not repent, he should be executed.

Therefore, the judgment and subsequent punishment regarding a man’s homosexuality with his slave is the same as if it had been done to any other type of person.

¹ Surat Al-Hajj, Verse 4.

Is it possible to treat this or any other incurable disease?

Is there be any possible way to treat a harmful virus?

Could a person intoxicated with infatuation regain his/her consciousness and repossess his/her heart once more?

The answer is yes, as this positive answer comes from the Hadith: “Whatever disease Allah ﷻ has sent down, He ﷻ has (also) appointed a cure for it.”¹

There are two ways of treating the disease of a heart corrupted with lust:

First, stop its cause before it becomes established as a habit.
Second, removing the problem, before it dominates one’s mind.

Both ways are easy for one who gains the Support of Allah ﷻ, but are difficult for one who is not supported by Allah ﷻ. The way to stop this condition, before it settles in the heart, is to lower one’s gaze (from looking at the unlawful), as mentioned in previous chapters, because gazing is one of the arrows of Iblis (Satan), so whoever freely releases his gaze, would suffer perpetual regret.

There are many benefits of lowering one’s gaze:

- (1) It is in compliance with the Commandments of Allah ﷻ and a good opportunity for a person in his/her life.
In fact, there is nothing more beneficial to one in this

¹ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Medicine”, chapter 4, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 377, 413, 443, 453) (3/ 335) (4/ 278).

world and the Hereafter than to try one's utmost to comply with the Commandments of Allah ﷻ.

- (2) It prevents the effect of the poisonous arrow (of Satan) from reaching its target (the heart of man).
- (3) It keeps the heart in the harmonious company of Allah ﷻ. By freeing one's eyesight from all restrictions, it is given the opportunity to see the unlawful, which would scatter one's heart and distance it from Allah ﷻ. Letting one's gaze loose generates the separation of the heart from Allah ﷻ.
- (4) It strengthens one's heart and lightens it, just as loosening one's gaze weakens it and burdens it.
- (5) It brightens the heart, and it is for this reason that Allah ﷻ mentioned the Verse about light just after mentioning the Commandment to lower one's gaze; He ﷻ said: **﴿Say to the believers to lower their eyes and safeguard their private parts﴾**² then He ﷻ said: **﴿Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is as a niche and within it a lamp﴾**³ i.e. an example of His Light is the heart; whenever His Believing Servant complies to His Commandments and His Prohibitions. Whenever the heart of a believer lights up, good fortune appears before him/her from all sides, however when one's heart settles in darkness, all aspects of evil and difficulty surround him/her from all sides.
- (6) It inherits a truthful acumen to distinguish between truth and falsehood. Shuja' Al-Karamani used to say: "If a person follows the *Sunnah* and is mindful of Allah ﷻ, by lowering his gaze from the unlawful,

² Surat An-Nur, Verse 30.

³ Surat An-Nur, Verse 35.

and observes only what is lawful, his insight will not fail him.” When a man abstains from something, in compliance with the Divine Commandments, Allah ﷻ would replace whatever he/she missed by giving him/her good judgment, earned by developing good insight in the heart.

- (7) One’s heart would develop firmness, strength and power. It is said: “Whoever opposes his low desires, Satan fears (approaching) his shadow.” On the contrary, you will find that one who follows his own desires has a low and disgraceful self, which Allah ﷻ gives to those who disobey Him. Allah ﷻ said: **﴿But honour, power and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger, and the believers﴾**¹ and He ﷻ said: **﴿So do not become weak, nor be sad, and so you would become superior, if you were indeed true believers.﴾**² Faith is in words and actions; internally and externally; as Allah ﷻ said: **﴿Whoever desires honour, power and glory, then to Allah belong all Honour, Power and Glory. To Him ascend all the goodly words, and righteous deeds exalt it﴾**³ i.e. those who desire honour, power and glory should seek it through their obedience to Allah ﷻ, with goodly words followed with good deeds. In the supplication of *Qunuut*⁴, we ask Allah: “Surely, he to whom You show allegiance is never abased, and he whom You take as an enemy is never honoured.”

¹ Surat Al-Munafiqun, Verse 8.

² Surat Al-‘Imran, Verse 139.

³ Surat Fatir, Verse 10.

⁴ A long supplication said in *Salat Al-Witr*, and the Prophet ﷺ also did *Qunuut* in prescribed prayers whenever the Companions endured difficult times.

- (8) It blocks the way for Satan to enter into the heart. Indeed, Satan slips inside at the time of an unlawful look and goes straight to the heart, in an instant. Satan then starts to beautify an image before the gazer, in such a way that he/she would become besotted by it, as his/her heart would become inflamed with passion. It is for the reason that the punishment for those who desire to look at unlawful pictures is that Allah ﷻ would prepare for them, in the “interval world” (of the grave) between one’s death and resurrection, a fire-pit in which their souls would be cast until the Day of Resurrection. This was reported by the Prophet ﷺ in an authentic Hadith (from Al-Bukhari and Muslim), following a vision that was given to him by Allah ﷻ.
- (9) It helps the heart focus on its benefits, because letting the gaze loose would no doubt make the heart forget its duty, and would also give one’s base self the chance to follow its own desires, away from the remembrance of its Lord. Allah ﷻ said: **«Do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, and who follows his own lusts, and whose affair has been lost.»**⁵
- (10) There is a way linking the eyesight to one’s heart, so if one’s heart is corrupted, the eyesight becomes corrupted, and vice versa. When one’s heart is corrupted, it is no longer suitable to accommodate the Love and the Company of Allah ﷻ

A second way to stopping this disease before it settles in the heart is to occupy one’s heart with the Love and

⁵ Surat Al-Kahf, Verse 28.

Remembrance of Allah ﷻ. It is only common sense that when the self unties its bond with a beloved subject, it searches for a replacement that is higher in status. However, it needs to possess two qualities:

First, good judgment to distinguish between beloved and reprehensible levels of love, and so it may be possible to select the highest of the beloved levels from the lowest, and to bear the lowest of the reprehensible, in order to save oneself from its highest. This is an intellectual duty, so whoever acts differently would have a lower status than animals.

Second, there should be a strong determination to enable one to make the good choice and give up the bad one. Allah ﷻ denied the *Imamah* (leadership in Islam) to everyone, except those with patience and certainty; He ﷻ said: **«We made from among them leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and used to believe with certainty in Our Signs.»**¹

The heart cannot combine both the love for Allah and the passion for pictures.

It is necessary to understand that the love of Allah cannot co-exist with the love of whatever is unlawful; they are opposites which cannot be combined. It is inevitable that one would expel the other.

¹ Surat As-Sajdah, Verse 24.

The power of love should be devoted to Allah ﷻ, Alone, with no partners; any other love should only exist for the Sake of Allah ﷻ.

Any other love, which is devoted to others besides Allah ﷻ, would become a torment for its possessor. Allah ﷻ does not forgive His Servants for associating anything with Him in this love, but forgives other sins of whomsoever He wills.

The love of pictures exceeds the love of what is beneficial or non-beneficial for the Servant of Allah; therefore; he/she has to choose between these two loves, because both of them cannot co-exist in the same heart.

Whoever turns away from the Love of Allah ﷻ and from the desire to meet Him, Allah ﷻ tries him/her with the love for others, to punish him/her with this invalid love, in this world and in the Hereafter. He ﷻ punishes him/her with the love of idols, or the love of the cross, or the love of women/men, or the love of relatives, or the love of what is disgraceful and vile.

Indeed, whoever does not take Allah ﷻ as His God, has taken his/her vain desire as his/her god; Allah ﷻ has said: **«Have you see him who takes his own lust as his god? And Allah knowing such, left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah? Will you not then remember?»**²

² Surat Al-Jathiyah, Verse 23.

Worship is a degree of love

The characteristic of worship is love, with submission and humiliation, of the beloved. Whoever loves something and his/her heart submits to it, then his/her heart is actually worshipping it.

The levels of this love are:

The bond of love, which is called a bond because the lover is so fond of the beloved, and thus tied down.

Ardent love, as this love is poured towards the beloved.

Infatuation, as this love is closely attached to the heart. This meaning was used by Allah ﷻ to describe the punishment in Hell for the disbelievers: **(Its torment is ever an inseparable, permanent punishment.)**³

Passion, which is an excess of love; a description which is not suitable for the Status of Allah ﷻ.

Longing, which is the journey of the heart to its beloved; this was mentioned, with regard to Allah ﷻ, in a supplication of the Prophet ﷺ: “O Allah! I ask You, with the longing and desire to meet You...”¹

The Prophet ﷺ reported that Allah ﷻ said: “There is the desire of the Righteous Servants who long to meet Me; but My desire to meet them is even stronger.” This is the

³ Surat Al-Furqan, Verse 65.

¹ Recorded by Ahmad, on the authority of Ammar bin Yaserؓ.

meaning that the Prophet ﷺ mentioned in the Hadith: “Whoever loves meeting Allah, Allah loves to meet him.”²

The scholars have said, interpreting the Verse, **﴿Whoever hopes for the Meeting with Allah, then Allah’s Term is surely coming﴾**,³ that when Allah ﷻ knew about the strong desire of His Righteous Servants to meet Him, and that their hearts would not have been fully guided until they met Him. So He ﷻ set an appointed time for them to meet Him, in order to calm their souls. The best and most savoured life is that of those longing to meet their Lord. Their life is really a good life, as there is no more blessed or peaceful life than that. It is the good life mentioned by Allah ﷻ: **﴿Whoever works righteousness – whether male of female – while he (or she) is a true believer, verily, to him We will give a good life﴾**.⁴ This does not refer to the life that is shared between believers and disbelievers, righteous and wrongdoers, such as having good food, clothing, weddings – and perhaps even the Enemies of Allah exceed in these blessings, more than the believers. The good life mentioned by Allah ﷻ is that which makes the believer’s heart focus only on pleasing Him, Alone, in all his/her actions. The Prophet ﷺ reported that Allah ﷻ said: “Whosoever shows enmity to someone devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him. My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with *nawafil* (extra optional duties), so that I shall love him.

² Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of *Dhikr*”, Hadith 14-18, At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Funerals”, chapter 67, An-Nassai in the “Book of Funerals”, chapter 10, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 313).

³ Surat Al-‘Ankabut, Verse 5.

⁴ Surat An-Nahl, Verse 97.

When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask something of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about seizing the soul of My Faithful Servant: he hates death and I hate hurting him, but it is necessary for him.”⁵

In this Hadith, Allah ﷻ defined the reasons for his/her love of two things: performing His Prescribed Religious Duties, and striving to get closer to Him with optional duties.

When a person continues to perform optional religious duties (such as extra prayers and fasting) out of love for Allah ﷻ, he/she becomes one of the Dearly Beloved Servants of Allah, and when a person reaches this state, his/her heart would never be directed to love anyone else more than Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ specified the hearing, eyesight, hands and feet in this Hadith because they are the means of perception and action. The hearing and eyesight provide the willpower for the heart (to do an action) or the dislike (of doing it), love and hate; and after that a person uses his/her hands and feet. If the hearing and eyesight of a person are perceived with (mindfulness of) Allah, his/her perception would be well safeguarded, and also his/her love and hate would be well preserved. It is this Company of Allah with His Righteous

⁵ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, “*Ar-Riqaq*”, chapter 38, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (6/212).

Servant which is special, and this is stressed in the following Verses:

«Do not be sad (or afraid), surely Allah is with us»¹

«Allah is with the *Muhsinun* (good-doers)»²

«Truly, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who are *Muhsinun* (good-doers.)»³

«Be patient. Surely, Allah is with those who are patient.»⁴

«Nay, verily with me is my Lord. He will guide me.»⁵

«Do not be afraid, verily, I am with you both, hearing and seeing.»⁶ speaking to Musa (Moses) and Harun ﷺ.

It is this Company with Allah ﷻ which eases all the complex situations from a believer, and turns all his/her fears into safety and serenity. With the Company of Allah ﷻ, a believer overcomes all his/her worries and anxieties, so whatever is distant and unattainable becomes close and attainable.

Without the Company of Allah, a person's heart would become like a fish out of water, turning and struggling until it gets back into the water, where it regains its life again.

¹ Surat At-Tawbah, Verse 40.

² Surat Al-'Ankabut, Verse 69.

³ Surat An-Nahl, Verse 128.

⁴ Surat Al-Anfal, Verse 46.

⁵ Surat Ash-Shu'ara', Verse 62.

⁶ surat Ta-Ha, Verse 46.

Allah ﷻ mentioned the most honoured of all His Creation and the most beloved to Him ﷺ; His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ in the highest status of worship – i.e. calling people to worship Allah ﷻ, Alone, and declaring his Prophethood, when Allah ﷻ said:

«When the Servant of Allah (Muhammad ﷺ) stood up invoking Him (His Lord –Allah) in prayer, they (the Jinn) just made round him a dense crowd, as if sticking one over the other, (in order to listen to the Prophet’s recitation)»⁷

«If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to Our Servant (Muhammad ﷺ) then bring a *Surah* of the like thereof»⁸

«Glorified (and Exalted) is He (Allah), Who took His Servant (Muhammad ﷺ) for a journey, by night, from Al-Masjid Al-Haram to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa»⁹

Allah ﷻ created His Creation in order to worship Him, Alone, without associated partner with Him, as this is the most perfect type of love and submission to Him ﷻ. This is true Islam, the religion of Ibrahim ﷺ, as Allah ﷻ said: **«Who turns away from the Religion of Ibrahim, except him who befools himself? Truly, We chose him in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous. When his Lord said to him: “Submit (i.e. be a Muslim!)” He said: “I have submitted myself (as a**

⁷ Surat Al-Jinn, Verse 19.

⁸ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 23.

⁹ Surat Al-Isra', Verse 1.

Muslim) to the Lord of the ‘*Alamin* (mankind and *jinn* and all that exists)”, and this submission to Allah was enjoined by Ibrahim, upon his sons, and by Ya’qub (Jacob), saying: “O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the True Religion, then do not die except in the Faith of Islam.” Or were you witnesses when death approached Ya’qub? When he said to his sons: “What will you worship after me?” They said: “We shall worship your God, the God of your fathers, Ibrahim, Isma’il (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac); One God; and to Him we submit (in Islam).”¹

It is for this reason that the worst of all sins is polytheism, the basis of which is not devoting all one’s love for Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah, as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe love Allah more.﴾**²

True worship cannot be achieved by associating partners with Allah, in this love. This is contrary to having love for the Sake of Allah, which is a fundamental aspect of worshipping Allah. In fact, to love the Prophet ﷺ, or rather love him before ourselves, our fathers and sons, is necessary to complete one’s faith, because loving the Prophet ﷺ is a part of having love for Allah ﷻ. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever possesses the (following) three qualities will have the sweetness of faith (1): The one for whom Allah and His Messenger become dearer than anything else; (2) Whoever loves a person and he loves him only for Allah’s Sake; (3)

¹ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verses 130-133.

² Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 165.

whoever hates to revert to atheism (disbelief) as he would hate to be thrown into the Fire.”³

The Prophet ﷺ said: “If anyone loves for Allah’s Sake, hates for Allah’s Sake, gives for Allah’s Sake, and withholds for Allah’s Sake, he would have perfect faith.”⁴

This type of love is one of the prerequisites for having love for Allah; the stronger it is, the more powerful is its foundation.

Types of love

There are four types of love, which should be distinguished from each other, and whosoever is not able to differentiate between them is indeed led astray.

First, love for Allah; this alone is not enough to save man from the Punishment of Allah, and to receive His Reward, for the polytheists and those who worship the Cross (the Christians) and the Jews claim to love Allah.

Second, to love what Allah ﷻ loves. It is this type which enters a person into Islam and removes him from polytheism. The dearest of people to Allah are those who observe this kind of love well.

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the “Book of *Iman*”, chapter 9, Muslim in the “Book of *Iman*”, Hadith 66, An-Nassai in the “Book of *Iman*”, chapter 2-4, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 103, 114, 173).

⁴ Recorded by Abu Dawud in the “Book of *Sunnah*”, chapter 15, At-Tirmidhi in the book, “The Resurrection”, chapter 60, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 438, 440).

Third, to love for Allah's Sake, which is one of the prerequisites of loving what He ﷻ loves.

Fourth, to direct one's love to others besides Allah; loving Allah ﷻ and other idols at the same time. This is the love of polytheists. Whoever loves others along with Allah, not for the Sake of Allah, then he has taken them as other gods besides Allah.

There is another fifth type of love, which is not part of our subject. It is man's natural love for things which are suitable to his nature; such as the love of the thirsty person for water, and the hungry one for food; the love of sleep, one's wife and children. These are types of love which are not criticised, unless they distract a man from remembering Allah ﷻ, and from loving Him. Allah ﷻ said: **«O you who believe! Let not your properties nor your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah»**¹ and He ﷻ also said: **«Men whom neither sale nor trade diverts from the remembrance of Allah.»**²

Al-Khullah (the perfect love in friendship)

This is intimate friendship, characterised by perfect love, belonging to a heart which has no place for others besides his/her beloved one. It is a position which does not accept sharing, of any kind. This position is special for the *khalilan* (two intimate friends) of Allah ﷻ: Ibrahim ؑ and

¹ Surat Al-Munafiqun, Verse 9.

² Surat An-Nur, Verse 37.

Muhammad ﷺ, as the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah has taken me as a *khalil*, just as he had taken Ibrahim as a *khalil*.”³

The Prophet ﷺ also said: “If I were to take a *khalil*, I would have taken Abu Bakr, but he is my brother and my companion in Islam.”

He ﷺ also said: “I am innocent from any *khalil* for his intimate friendship, (besides his love of Allah ﷻ)”⁴

When Ibrahim ؑ asked his Lord for a child, even at an advanced age, he was given Isma'il ؑ. The heart of Ibrahim was besotted with love for his new child, so Allah ﷻ wanted to test Ibrahim and see – while He ﷻ is the All-Knower of everything, seen and unseen – if the intimate friendship between them had been affected by the arrival of the new child; so He ﷻ ordered Ibrahim, in a dream, to slaughter his son. It was a divine Command, coming as a real vision, which became a great test for Ibrahim ؑ. The aim was not to slaughter his son, in reality, but to slaughter the excessive love that Ibrahim had for his son in his heart, so that his heart would stay fully devoted to Allah ﷻ. When Ibrahim ؑ set about slaughtering his son, placing the love for Allah before of the love for his son, the intended mission had been achieved and so Allah ﷻ ransomed the son for the great sacrifice (of a sheep).

Some people are wrong when they think that love could be more perfect than *Khullah* (intimate friendship), and that

³ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the book, “The Introduction”, chapter 11.

⁴ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/377, 389, 395, 408, 410, 412, 433).

Ibrahim ؑ was a *Khalil* of Allah, while Muhammad was a dear and beloved one of Allah. The term “love” has a general context, while “*Khullah*” is more specific; *Al-Khullah* is the end and outcome of sincere love. The Prophet ﷺ has informed that Allah ﷻ had taken him and Ibrahim as His two *Khalils*. He ﷺ denied that he had any *khalil* besides his Lord, while at the same time declaring his love for ‘Aishah, for her father Abu Bakr, for ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab, and others.

Allah ﷻ also declares His love for His righteous people, saying:

«Truly, Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance, and loves those who purify themselves»⁵

«Allah loves the Patient»⁶

«Allah loves the good-doers»⁷

«Verily, Allah loves those who act justly.»⁸

Performing an act or abandoning it is a matter of choice

The choice as to whether or not to do an act is based on the benefit that is achieved from it, or the relief it produces after the removal of pain. This choice has been taken by reasonable people as well as animals. However, many people wrong themselves badly when they only think of

⁵ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 222.

⁶ Surat Al-‘Imran, Verse 146.

⁷ Surat Al-‘Imran, Verse 148.

⁸ Surat Al-Ma’idah, Verse 42.

achieving satisfaction, even if it is subsequently followed by a great suffering. This is the case of short-sighted people; those who think only of satisfaction in the present and ignore any bad consequences in the future.

The most reasonable person is one who prefers a lasting, peaceful state of mind to the ephemeral, short-lived satisfactions of life. A foolish person is one who exchanges Eternal Blessings, a good, lasting life and perfect satisfaction for brief and fading satisfaction, troubled with sufferings, fears and anxieties.

The only way to achieve real satisfaction is to turn to Allah ﷻ, Alone, and seek His Pleasure, in every action. In this way, if a person had missed out on anything in this world, he/she would indeed have earned his/her great chance, which cannot be missed, of achieving Peace in the Hereafter; and if he/she had not missed anything in this world, while remaining in total obedience to Allah ﷻ, then he/she would have achieved both satisfactions, in this world and the Hereafter. This is the way to one's happiness, with Success from Allah ﷻ.

Love is the basis of every action

Love is the basis of every activity, whether in truth or falsehood, and the basis of all Islamic activities is having love for Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, just as the basis of the Revelation (the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*) is having belief in Allah and His Messenger.

Any feeling that prevents the perfection of this love for Allah and His Messenger, competing with this love, is indeed opposed to the basis of Faith and weakens its base. If it is

strengthened until it opposes the basis of the love of Allah or the belief in the Revelation, it becomes a form of polytheism which negates one's Faith. If it does not oppose it, it impairs its credible perfection.

Therefore, real friendship in Islam is not achieved, except by showing enmity to the Enemies of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ stated that Ibrahim ؑ questioned his people: **«Do you observe that which you have been worshipping, you and your ancient fathers? Verily, they are enemies to me, except the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists).»**¹

Ibrahim, the *Khalil* of Allah, did not establish his real intimate friendship with Allah, until he declared his enmity towards those of his people who worshipped deities besides Allah ﷻ. There is no friendship except for Allah's Sake, and there is no friendship except by declaring one's freedom from anything worshipped besides Him ﷻ.

For Allah ﷻ said: **«Indeed, there was an excellent example for you in Ibrahim and those with him, when they said to their people: "Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allah; we have rejected you, and there has appeared between us and you hostility and hatred, for ever, until you believe in Allah, Alone."»**² and He ﷻ said: **«Remember when Ibrahim said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him (i.e. I worship none but Allah, Alone), Who did create me; and verily, He will guide me"»**

¹ Surat Ash-Shu'ara', Verse 75-77.

² Surat Al-Mumtahanah, Verse 4.

and he made it a Word, lasting among his offspring, that they may turn back (to Allah))³ i.e. he ﷺ made friendship for Allah's Sake and freedom from anything worshipped besides Allah as a lasting "word", to be inherited by the prophets and followers after him; this word is the testimony of Faith: (*la ilaha illallah* – none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, Alone). It was the "word" upon which the heavens, earth and religion were established. It was for this "word" that the *Qiblah*¹ was fixed and the Swords of *Jihad* were raised. It is the "word" which safeguards one's blood, property in the Muslim land, and rescues one from the Punishment of the grave. No one would enter Paradise without it; it is the Word of Islam, and the key to the House of Peace, the House of Faith. It distinguishes a house of blessings from one of torments and hardships. It is the pole carrying religious obligations and the Sunnah, for he whose last word was *la-ilaha-illallah* enters Paradise.

The essence of this "word" and its secret is: to single out Allah, to Whom belongs all Sovereignty and Praise, with Love, Praise and Glorification. To love none but Him; to ask none but Him; to rely on none but Him; to desire to please none but Him; to fear none but Him; to swear by no other name but His; to repent only to Him; to obey only His Command; to ask for salvation only from Him; to prostrate to none but Him; to sacrifice (an animal) only to Him. All this can be combined in one word: to worship none but Him ﷻ Alone . This is the realization of the Testimony of Faith, (*la ilaha illallah*).

³ Surat Az-Zukhruf, Verse 26-28.

¹ The direction to which Muslims turn when praying *Salat*.

It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ forbade the Hell-Fire for the one who establish this Testimony of Faith in their lives and stand by it, as Allah ﷻ said: **«Those who stand firmly upon their testimonies.»**² A believer stands firmly upon his/her testimony in his/her heart, where it is in the same position as the spirit is in the body. A sick person is one close to death, whereas a spirit observing the health of the body is alive. So the life of this spirit depends upon the life of this word (by having the Testimony of Faith within it), just as the life of the body depends upon the existence of the spirit within it.

Whoever has lived his life holding firmly to this “word” and observing its obligations, his/her spirit would enjoy its new destined good life in Paradise, for Allah ﷻ has said:

«As for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires and lusts, verily, Paradise is his abode.»³

«Whoever works righteousness – whether male or female – while he (or she) is a true believer, verily, to him We will give a good life»⁴

«No doubt! Verily, the *auliya*’ of Allah (i.e. those who believe in the Oneness of Allah, fearing and loving Him much), no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve; those who believe and used to fear Allah much; for them are glad tidings, in the life of the present world

² Surat Al-Ma’arij, Verse 33.

³ Surat An-Nazi’at, Verses 40-41.

⁴ Surat An-Nahl, Verse 97.

and in the Hereafter. No change can there be in the Words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme success.)⁵

The believer who is sincere in his/her worship of Allah is the one of those people who enjoys the best life, most restful mind, most open heart, most cheerful heart, which is a type of paradise in this world (for him/her) before the one in the Hereafter.

Anas bin Malik رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When you come upon the pastures of Paradise feed on them.” On being asked what the pastures of Paradise were, he ﷺ replied that they were circles where Allah was remembered.”⁶ He ﷺ also said: “The distance between my home and my pulpit is a pasture of Paradise.”⁷

There is nothing more beneficial to the believer than turning to Allah ﷻ, in every matter, remembering Him and working hard to please Him, in order to enjoy His Love.

The Prophet ﷺ reported that Allah ﷻ said: “Son of Adam! I have created you to worship Me, so do not waste your time playing around. I have taken charge of your blessings and provisions, so you do not tire yourself. Son of Adam! Call Me and you will find Me, and if you find Me, you find everything; but if you miss Me, you miss everything; for I am more beloved to you than anything else.”

⁵ Surat Yunus, Verse 62-64.

⁶ Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Supplications”, chapter 82, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 150).

⁷ Recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (2/ 236, 376, 401).

Types of love

Love or attachment is a name, of which there are many types differing in their degree and description. The type most mentioned, with regards to Allah ﷻ, is the one which is only suitable for Allah's Status (and not to anyone or anything else), such as worship and devotion to Him, Alone.

The term love can be mentioned in its general context, as in the Verses:

«Allah will bring people, whom He wills, and they will love Him.»¹

«And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah, as rivals. They love them (as much) as they love Allah.»²

The worst love, which is categorically prohibited in Islam, is to have an equal love for others besides Allah; while the greatest type of love is to love Allah, Alone, and to love whatever He ﷻ loves. This is the basis of happiness in this world and the Hereafter, which saves one from any punishment. The prohibited love, which is a type of polytheism, is the basis of torment in this world and the Hereafter.

Those who love Allah ﷻ and worship Him, Alone, do not enter the Hell-Fire, and if they ever enter it because of some sins, none of them would stay in it.

¹ Surat Al-Ma'idah, Verse 54.

² Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 165.

The Qur'an is centred on this commandment of love and its obligations, and on the prohibition of the other type and its requirements. It gives examples and stories of both types, with details of their devotees. It also gives the conditions of both types in the three worlds: the condition in this world, the condition in the grave, and the condition in the Hereafter. The basis of the Message of all the prophets ﷺ is to worship Allah ﷻ, Alone, without partners; such a worship which comprises the perfection of love, submission, humiliation, praise and glorification to Him ﷻ, along with obedience and fear as necessary prerequisites.

Anas bin Malik ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, none of you will not have complete faith, till I am dearer to him than his son, his father and all people."³

Abdullah bin Hisham ؓ said: "We were with the Prophet while he was holding the hand of 'Umar bin Al-Khattab. 'Umar said to Him: 'O Messenger of Allah! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self.' The Prophet ﷺ said: 'No, by Him in Whose Hand my soul is, you will not have complete faith, till I am dearer to you than your own self.' Then 'Umar said to him: 'However, now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self.' The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Now, O 'Umar, (you are a believer).'"⁴ If this is the case for loving the Prophet ﷺ and the obligation to place his love before that for one's child, father and all people, then what

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the "Book of Oaths", chapter 8, Muslim in the "Book of Oaths", Hadith 69, An-Nassai in the "Book of Oaths", chapter 19, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 177, 207, 275).

⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari.

about the love due to the One Who sent Muhammad ﷺ as His Messenger?

Love stands behind every determination and action

Love remains the basis behind every action and its effective cause.

There are three types of actions: a chosen action, a natural one, and a compelled one.

The basis of a natural action is a state of static equilibrium, for the body moves only when it leaves its natural state of balance and returns to this state when an action is finished.

A chosen action which relies on one's will power, is the basis of the other types of actions, for it relates to will power and love.

The best example of this concept is in the actions both in the heavens and on the earth, such as the movements of the galaxies, stars, wind, clouds, rain, plants, embryos in their wombs; they are all executed by the appointed angels who arrange to obey the Commands of Allah ﷻ, such as distributing His Blessings (by His Command). This is mentioned in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and it is derived from the belief in the Angels, as one of the precepts of Faith. In fact, Allah ﷻ has appointed angels for the wombs (to take care of any new coming baby), angels for the rain, angels for vegetation, angels for the wind, angels for the stars, angels for the mountains, and for the clouds which carry rain to any specific destination. Allah ﷻ also appointed four angels for every person (two writers – one on his/her right and one on

his/her left recording all his/her words and actions – and two protectors – one in front of him/her and one behind him/her). He ﷻ also appointed angels to take away a person's spirit (at his/her death) and prepare its new dwelling in Paradise or in Hell; angels to question him/her (after his/her death) and test him/her in the grave, where he/she would either be blessed or tormented; angels to take him/her to the Gathering Place, when he/she rises from his/her grave; angels to punish him/her in Hell, or bless him/her in Paradise.

The angels are the soldiers of Allah ﷻ, and the term “angel” just means messenger, executing the Commands of Allah ﷻ, without having any decision in the matter. The whole matter belongs to Allah ﷻ, Alone. The angels are simply implementing the Divine Commands.

Allah ﷻ said, informing about them:

﴿We (angels) do not descend except by the Command of your Lord (O Muhammad ﷺ). To Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us, and what is between those two; and your Lord is never forgetful﴾¹

﴿There are many angels in the heavens, whose intercession will avail nothing, except after Allah has given leave to whom He wills and is pleased with.﴾²

Allah ﷻ has sworn by a number of His Angels who execute His Commands, saying:

¹ Surat Maryam, Verse 64.

² Surat An-Najm, Verse 26.

﴿By those (angels) arranged in rows. By those (angels) who drive the clouds in a good way. By those (angels) who deliver the Book and the Qur'an from Allah to mankind.﴾¹

﴿By the winds (or angels or the Messengers of Allah) sent forth, one after another. By the winds that blow violently. By the winds that scatter clouds and rain. By the (Verses of the Qur'an) that separate the right from the wrong. By the angels that deliver the Revelations of the Messengers, to cut off all excuses or warn.﴾²

﴿By those (angels) who pull out (the souls of the disbelievers and the wicked) with great violence. By those (angels) who gently take out (the souls of the believers). By those that swim along (i.e. angels or planets in their orbit). By those (angels) who arrange to do the Commands of their Lord.﴾³

All those movements and actions are the angels' worship of Allah ﷻ. It is their love of Allah which makes them execute His Commands willingly; and it is this love which makes the heavens and the earth glorify their Lord **﴿The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him; for there is not a thing but glorifies His Praise. But you understand not their glorification. Truly, He is Ever Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.﴾**⁴

¹ Surat As-Saffat, Verses 1-3

² Surat Al-Mursalat, Verse 1-6.

³ Surat An-Nazi'at, Verses 1-5.

⁴ Surat Al-Isra', Verse 44.

Therefore, every living or moving thing has a will, love and action accorded to it, and all the existing parts in this universe would not be useful unless their movements and love were devoted for their Creator, Alone, just as their existence itself is due only to His Exclusive Creativity.

It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ said: **‘(Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) gods besides Allah, then verily both would have been ruined.)’**¹

Indeed, if there were two gods for this world, its system would have been in chaos, as each god would have sought to overcome the other or destroy him, in order to be singled out as the only true deity, and because sharing with another deity is a shortcoming in a deity’s perfection.

A god would never be pleased to have a shortcoming; so if one destroyed the other, he would be the only god, while the other defeated one could no longer be described as god. But if none should overcome the other, then they both would have a defect, and there should be a stronger god above them, otherwise each one of them would take what he had created and use it to overcome the other. This situation would lead to the destruction of all that existed in the heavens and the earth, just like the damage which is left in a country where there were two kings fighting each other for the throne!

Therefore, the righteousness of the heavens and the earth, and the perfect system that organises the existence of all creatures, is manifest proof that there is no god but Allah ﷻ,

¹ Surat Al-Anbiya’, Verse 22.

Alone, without any associate; to Him belongs all sovereignty and praise; He gives life and causes death; and He is Omnipotent over all things. Allah ﷻ said: **«No son did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him. If there had been many gods, then each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others! Glorified is Allah above all that they attribute to Him!»**¹

«Or have they taken (for worship) gods from the earth who raise the dead? Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) gods besides Allah, then verily both would have been ruined. Glorified is Allah, the Lord of the Throne, (High is He) above all that they associate with Him! He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while they will be questioned.»²

«Say: If there had been other gods along with Him as they assert, then they would certainly have sought out a way to the Lord of the Throne.»³

The effects of love

Love carries with it many consequences, effects and requirements; whether praiseworthy or reprehensible, useful or harmful; in passion, taste, sweetness, desire, company, communication, closeness, separation, abandonment, happiness, sadness, etc.

¹ Surat Al-Mu'minun, Verses 91.

² Surat Al-Anbiya', Verses 21-23.

³ Surat Al-Isra', Verse 42.

Praiseworthy love is one which is useful and valuable, as it attracts all good to its owner in this world and the Hereafter to establish his/her happiness. Whereas, harmful love is one which attracts all that is damaging to its owner in his/her world and in his/her Hereafter to establish a life of torment for him/her.

Any reasonable person would not choose what is harmful for him/her, and if he/she ever did, it would have been out of ignorance, because sometimes the self wants to discover what is harmful, which leads a person to become unjust to him/herself.

When a person chooses what is harmful to him/her in his/her life, his/her choice is either based on a wrong belief or a bad desire. This is the case of those who follow their conjectures and those things which they themselves desire.

The emotional effects (of sadness or happiness) of the praiseworthy love, which earn the believer rewards, are all useful to him/her, whereas those of the reprehensible love earn him/her nothing but loss and harm.

This is the consequence of every action, either done in obedience to Allah ﷻ or in disobedience to Him. For Allah ﷻ said:

﴿That is because they suffer no thirst, nor fatigue, nor hunger in the Cause of Allah, nor do they take any step to raise the anger of disbelievers, nor inflict any injury upon an enemy, but it is written to their credit as a deed of righteousness. Surely, Allah does not waste the reward of the good-doers. Nor do they spend anything

(in Allah' Cause) – small or great – nor cross a valley, but is written to their credit, that Allah may recompense them with they best of what they used to do.)¹

Love is the basis of every religion

Religion is both an inner and manifest deed; and love and will form the basis of all those deeds. Religion is defined as obedience to Allah, worship of Allah, and good character beloved to Allah ﷺ. It is the necessary and continuous obedience (to Allah), which has become the character of Islam. It is for this reason that having good character has been interpreted as the true way of religion, in the Verse: **﴿Verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character.﴾²**

Ibn 'Abbas ؓ said that he had asked 'Aishah ؓ about the character of the Prophet ﷺ, to which she replied: "His character was the Qur'an."

One's inner belief necessitates true love and submission, in worshipping Allah ﷻ, whereas one's manifest belief does not necessarily require this love, despite the fact that there are signs of obedience and humiliation in all the visible actions of worship.

Allah ﷻ called the Day of Resurrection, the Day of the Religion (*Yawm-ud-Deen*); it is the Day on which people are judged for their deeds, and receive good rewards for their

¹ Surat Tawbah, Verse 120.

² Surat Al-Qalam, Verse 4.

good deeds, and punishment for their bad deeds. It is also called the Day of Requitul or the Day of Reckoning.

Allah ﷻ said: **‘Then why do you not, if you are exempt from this reckoning and recompense, bring back the soul to its body if you are truthful?’**¹

This Verse was revealed to all those who deny the resurrection and reckoning; they are disbelievers because they deny God His Omnipotence, Godliness and Wisdom. Allah ﷻ challenges them to stop the Angel of Death from taking away their soul in their dying moments, or to bring it back again once it is taken away.

Islam is a legislative and commanding religion, and the Religion of the Reckoning and Recompense of the Day of Resurrection.

Allah ﷻ only commands what He loves and is pleased with, so whatever He ﷻ hates and dislikes He prohibits. Therefore, Islam, the Religion of Allah, is all based upon Allah’s Love and Pleasure.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “He would relish the flavour of faith (*Iman*), whoever became pleased with Allah as Lord, with al-Islam as the code of life, and with Muhammad as the Messenger of Allah.”²

¹ Surat Al-Waqi’ah, Verses 86-87.

² Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of *Iman*”, Hadith 56, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/ 208).

Islam stands firmly with love, for which reason it has been prescribed and legislated, and upon which it is based. Its reckoning aspect consists of recompensing a good-doer for his/her beneficence, and an evil-doer for his/her misdeeds, as both matters are loved by Allah ﷻ, for they are derived from His Justice and Graciousness, which are Attributes of His Perfection.

Islam, the Religion of Allah is the Right Path, and Allah ﷻ is on the Right Path; in His Commands, Prohibitions, Rewards and Punishments. Allah ﷻ has, informed us about His Prophet Hud ؑ, who said to his people: **“I call Allah to witness and bear witness upon you that I am free from that which you ascribe, as partners in worship with Him. So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving living creature but He has the grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the Straight Path.”**¹

Hud ؑ declared his belief in the Omnipotence of Allah ﷻ, and that he did not fear his disbelieving people, whose affairs were under the Grasp of Allah ﷻ.

Whenever a Muslim believes that Allah ﷻ is on the Straight Path, in all His Divine Decrees, he is no longer scared that he might be unjustly treated.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “When a Muslim is afflicted with grief and distress, and says: ‘O Allah, I am Your Servant, son of Your Servant, son of Your Maidservant, my forelock is in Your Hand, Your Command over me is forever executed,

¹ Surat Hud, Verses 54-56.

Your Decree over me is just. I ask You; by every Name belonging to You, which You named Yourself, or revealed in Your Book, or that You taught any of Your creation, or that You have preserved in the Knowledge of the unseen that is with You; that You make the Qur'an the life of my heart and the light of my breast, and the departure for my sorrow, and a release for my anxiety', Allah ﷻ removes his worry and grief from him, and changes them to relief and pleasure." The Companions said: "Should we learn them?" He ﷻ replied: "Yes, every Muslim who has heard them should learn them."¹

The evil consequences of the passionate desire to look at illegal pictures

We conclude this book with a detailed chapter about the present and the future evil consequences of looking at unlawful pictures, or looking at women's unveiled faces. It corrupts the heart, and if the heart is corrupted, all one's willpower, words and actions would become corrupted, and so one's faith would also be affected, if not corrupted.

Allah ﷻ mentioned this disease, with regards to the people of Lut and women. He ﷻ has informed us of the passionate desire of the King's wife for Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام. He ﷻ described the way she sought to tempt Yusuf عليه السلام, and the manner Yusuf عليه السلام withheld himself with patience, abstinence and fear of Allah, and indeed it was Allah ﷻ Who helped

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the "Book of Supplications", chapter 16, Muslim in the "Book for Travellers", Hadith 201, Ibn Maajah in the "Book of Supplications", chapter 15.

him overcome his test, because it was surely a very difficult trial for human patience, alone.

The execution of an act depends on one's motivation and the absence of any obstacle. The motive in Yusuf's case was very powerful for different reasons:

First, Allah ﷻ instilled in man's nature an inclination towards women, just as a thirsty person is drawn to water, and a hungry person to food, to the extent that many people could be patient regarding hunger and thirst yet not women, however this is not rebuked if the inclination is lawful (to one's wife, for example). Rather, it is praised, as in the Hadith of Anas ؓ who reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Perfume and women have been made dear to me in this world. I can be patient about hunger and thirst, but cannot be patient about them."¹

Second, the fact that Yusuf ؑ was a young man, and the passion of the youth is very strong.

Third, Yusuf ؑ was celibate. He had no wife or slave-girl to relieve his powerful desire for women.

Fourth, Yusuf ؑ was in another country, where a stranger could more easily have satisfied his sexual desire in a manner, which he could not have been able to do in his own country, among his family and relatives.

¹ Recorded by An-Nassai in the book, "Conduct towards Women concerning Marriage", chapter 1, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 128, 199, 285).

Fifth, the woman who seduced him had both status and beauty, and each of these qualities is a strong incentive to accept her offer.

Sixth, the woman was willing and had no objection. As many people's desire for women is impeded by women's objections, as they feel humiliated in asking them. However, other people's desires increase with women's refusal, as they feel more attracted by those women's soft manner, in rejecting their offer!

Seventh, it was the king's wife who asked him, tempted him and made the effort to seduce him, so she spared him all efforts to show his desire for her.

Eighth, Yusuf ﷺ was in her place, under her sovereignty and rule; for it was feared that if he refused her offer, she might harm him.

Ninth, there was no worry that she, or anyone from her side, might denounce him, because she was the one who desired him, as she locked all the doors behind them.

Tenth, he was publicly seen as her slave in her castle; he used to enter, go out and be present with her, and no one ever rebuked him. Their close company strengthened her desire for him, so this became one of the biggest incentives.

It used to be said to a noble Arab woman (in the pre-Islamic era): "What incited you to commit adultery?" She replied: "The closeness of the man's bed and the many secrets between us."

Eleventh, she sought the help of her maids to tempt him, but he sought the Allah's Help against them, saying: **«Unless you turn away their plot from me, I will feel inclined towards them and be one of the ignorant ones.»**¹

Twelfth, she threatened him with imprisonment and disgrace, and this was a type of coercion, with which the incentive of passion got stronger as he had to try to avoid being detained and disgraced.

Thirteenth, the woman's husband (the King) never showed any sense of honour or pride in separating his wife from Yusuf عليه السلام. Rather, the best he could say was: **«O Yusuf, turn away from this!»,** and to the woman: **«Ask forgiveness for your sin, verily you were of the sinful.»** The king certainly lacked self-respect.

Despite that there were all these incentives, Yusuf عليه السلام chose to please Allah ﷻ, Alone. His love and fear of Allah made him choose prison rather than commit fornication: **«He said: O my Lord! Prison is dearer to me than that to which they invite me.»**²

Yusuf عليه السلام knew that it was in his ability to keep himself away from her invitation, and that if his Lord did not save him from their temptations, he would have felt inclined towards them, as this is in his nature as a man. Yusuf's words showed his perfect knowledge of his Lord and of himself.

¹ Surat Yusuf, Verse 33

² Surat Yusuf, Verse 33.

Lut's people (homosexuals)

As for Lut's people, Allah ﷻ mentioned the degree of their passion, saying: **«The inhabitants of the city came rejoicing (at the news of the young men's arrival). Lut said: "Verily, these are my guests, so do not shame me. Fear Allah, and do not disgrace me." They said: "Did we not forbid you from entertaining any of the 'Alamin (people, foreigners and strangers from us)?" Lut said: "These are my daughters (to marry lawfully) if you must act so." Verily, by your life (O Muhammad ﷺ) they were wandering blindly in their wild intoxication (intoxicated by their unlawful passion).»**¹

These people were blinded by their illegal desire, and their passion made them forget its harm.

This is a poisonous and crippling condition which has exhausted all doctors in its treatment. When this state of mind becomes attached to the heart, its burning passion takes control to completely dominate it.

Lust leads to polytheism

This can become an aspect of polytheism, because a person's heart, in some cases, adopts the lover as a rival to Allah ﷻ; he loves him as he loves Allah ﷻ; but what about the one whose love for his lover is greater than his love of Allah ﷻ?

This type of love is not to be forgiven; it is a type of polytheism, and Allah does not forgive polytheism; He ﷻ

¹ Surat Al-Hjir, Verses 67-72.

forgives those who repent, wiping away all aspects of polytheism in their hearts (i.e. for pure repentance).

One sign of this polytheistic love is that the passionate person prefers the pleasure of his lover to that of his Lord. When the rights of his lover are in conflict with the rights of his Lord, he gives precedence to the right of his lover!

This is the case of many of those who have an illegal passion for women, and an illegal passion for looking at their pictures or faces. Put their lustful passion on one side of the scales and put their Faith of Monotheism on the other, and then try to make a just measurement that would please Allah ﷻ and His Messenger.

Many of these people declare publicly that there is no longer a place in their heart; except for their lover. They have a predilection for their lover that is stronger than for their Creator. They have devoted all their love and passion for their lover and so have none left to worship Allah, knowing that worshipping Allah requires the perfection in one's love and submission.

The cure for this crippling condition is to know that the affliction by this ailment, which opposes one's Faith of Monotheism, comes from one's ignorance and one's heart's carelessness about remembering Allah ﷻ.

One first has to learn Allah's Monotheism and its Signs, then he should perform both the outward and inward acts of worship, which would occupy his/her heart in the constant remembrance of Allah ﷻ. He/she should turn to Allah ﷻ in

humiliation and submission, to seek His Help, in order to turn that ailment away from him/her.

There is no cure better than being sincere to Allah ﷻ, in all one's actions. It is the cure mentioned by Allah ﷻ, when He said: **«That happened, so We might avert from him all evil and lust. He was one of Our Chosen (Guided) Servants.»**¹ Allah ﷻ informed us that He turned Yusuf away from the evil and illegal sexual intercourse because of his sincere worship of his Lord.

One should also learn that following Islam and intellect enable the achievement of benefits for the individual, and remove or reduce all causes of corruption.

It is known that developing a passion for unlawful gazing at women or their pictures has neither religious nor worldly benefit. Rather, its evil consequences are too many to be counted, so we list but the following aspects:

First, the heart is completely devoted to its lover, and distracted from loving its Lord ﷻ or remembering Him. So is inevitable that one would overcome the other when they try to gather in the same heart.

Second, the heart would be tortured with it, because whoever loves something besides Allah ﷻ, would be punished by it.

¹ Surat Yusuf, Verse 24.

Third, the heart becomes a prisoner in the hands of its captor who could subject it to disgrace. An intoxicated heart becomes unaware of its humiliation.

Fourth, the heart is distracted from its religious and worldly benefits.

Fifth, all the ailments of this world and the Hereafter come rushing towards the heart, which is besotted by lust. Indeed, as the heart gets closer to satisfy its passion, it becomes distant from its Lord, and so it falls in the hands of the devil.

Sixth, when lust takes control of the heart, the mind becomes corrupted with emerging devilish whisperings.

Seventh, this ailment leads to the corruption of the senses, or at least some of them. In fact when the heart is corrupted, the eyes, the ears and the tongue also become corrupted. The eyes no longer see the evil aspects or shortcomings of the lover. The ears do not listen to the demands of giving up such an illegal habit, because the one who is involved in an activity does not see his defect; his ardent love for lust places a screen over his eyes. The only person, who is aware of it, is the one who was once involved in it and later gave it up. It is for this reason that the Companions who embraced Islam after a life in polytheism were better than those who were born in Islam.

‘Umar bin Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه said: “The bonds of Islam are violated, one after the other, by those who were born in Islam and never witnessed *Jahiliyah* (the pre-Islamic era).”

Eighth, passion is ardent or excessive love; it takes control of a man's heart and starts to vigorously use both his animal and mental powers, until his self-destruction occurs. This has well observed in the course of passion: its beginning is sweet, its middle is full of worry and anxiety, and its end is self-destruction.

In the beginning of such passion, the scholars have said that a person should resist it to his best capability, if it had not been decreed for him to reach his lover legally (through marriage). However, if he fails to resist its power, he should at least keep silent about, and not reveal it to other people, because he would be violating the sanctity of the lover, and add more injustice upon himself.

There are many ailments generated by this lustful passion, which in some cases has led people, who were brought up in Islam, into polytheism. Indeed, a Caller to prayer (*Mu'addhin*) once saw a beautiful woman from the roof and was infatuated by her. So he went down and asked to be her lover. She replied that she was a Christian, and that she would marry him if he accepted to embrace her religion. He accepted, however on the same day, when he climbed a step on their roof, he fell and died.

When some Christians wanted to turn a Muslim prisoner away from his religion, they exposed him to a beautiful woman, and she would then have to attract his attention, until she took control of his heart. Then she would have to offer herself to him if he embraced her religion! This would be in such moment that **Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the Word that stands firm in this world and**

in the Hereafter; and Allah will cause to go astray those who are wrong-doers, and Allah does what He wills.﴾¹

A reasonable person would not subject himself to this kind of passionate desire, because it simply leads to evil consequences. Whoever occupies his mind with lust is merely deceiving himself and may even destroy it, as had he not been constantly gazing at the face of his beloved, lust would not have dominated his heart.

The most beneficial love is that of Allah ﷻ which is absolute; that which all hearts are instinctively born with. This is the secret of the Testimony of Faith, because God is the One Whom hearts worship with love, glorification, praise and submission.

Yet worship is not accepted if it is not directed to Allah ﷻ, Alone, as worship is the perfection of love together with the perfection of submission and humiliation.

The proof of this obligation to love Allah ﷻ was mentioned in all of His Revelations, the Message of His Prophets, and the natural order endowed by Allah ﷻ in His Servants. People's hearts are naturally attracted to love the One Who bestows His Blessings upon them, as Allah ﷻ has said: **﴿Whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah. Then, when harm touches you, unto Him you cry aloud for help.﴾²**

¹ Surat Ibrahim, Verse 27.

² Surat an-Nahl, Verse 53.

This proof is also evident once His Servants learn His Best Names and Attributes, which designate His Perfection and Supremacy.

Love has two attractors: beauty and honour; which Allah ﷻ possesses to a degree of absolute perfection. He ﷻ is graceful and loves grace, as all grace belongs to Him ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said (addressing His Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ): **«Say: If you really love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love and forgive you your sins.»**¹ He ﷻ also said: **«O You who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion (Islam), Allah will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the way of Allah, and never afraid of the blame of the blamers. That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He wills: Allah is All-Sufficient for His Creatures' Needs, All-Knower. Verily, your *Wali* (helper or protector) is none other than Allah, His Messenger, and the believers, those who perform *Salat*, and give *Zakat*, and bow down with obedience to Allah in prayer. Whosoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and those who have believed as Protectors, then the Party of Allah will be the victorious.»**²

The basis of taking someone as a protector is love, just as the basis of enmity is hatred. Allah ﷻ is the *Walī* of those who believe, and they are His Pious People. He ﷻ loves them, and He is their *Walī* according to the level of their love for Him ﷻ.

¹ Surat Al-‘Imran, Verse 31.

² Surat Al-Ma'idah, Verses 54-56.

Allah ﷻ has censured those who take others as protectors besides Him ﷻ; for He ﷻ said: **‘And of mankind are some who take others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe, love Allah more (than anything else).’**¹ He ﷻ informed us about those who take others as rivals to Him (in worship), when they say to these rivals as they gather in Hell: **‘By Allah, we were truly in manifest error, when we held you (false gods) as equals (in worship) with the Lord of the ‘Alamin.’**²

With this Monotheism, based on the love of Allah, Allah ﷻ sent all His Messengers with His Revelations, bearing the same Message from the First Prophet (Adam ﷺ) to the Last Prophet (Muhammad ﷺ); as it was for its sake that Allah ﷻ created the heavens and the earth, Paradise and Hell; making Paradise (as a permanent abode) for the people who love Him, and Hell (as one) for those who associate rivals to Him.

The Prophet ﷺ swore that a person’s faith is not complete until the Prophet ﷺ becomes dearer to him than his child, his father and all people; so what about the love of the Lord ﷻ?

He ﷺ also said to ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab: “No, until I am dearer to you than your own self” i.e. your faith is not complete until your love reaches this standard!

If the Messenger of Allah is more deserving (to us) than our own selves, in love and its requirements, then is the Lord ﷻ not more entitled to love than our own selves?

¹ Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 165.

² Surat Ash-Shu’ara’, Verses 97-98.

Allah ﷻ created man to worship Him, and created for him everything in the heavens and the earth; is the Lord not entitled to our love and pleasure (shown by our dedicated appreciation, awe and worship of Him, Alone)?

He ﷻ is the Most-Generous; He gives to His Servant even before His Servant asks Him for anything. He ﷻ appreciates the little effort from His Servant, and forgives so many misdeeds, expiating them. Everything that exists in the heavens and the earth asks of Him daily, and He ﷻ listens to the requests of everyone. He ﷻ is never confused by all the numerous requests from all His Servants, and He never gets annoyed by those who make most insistant supplications. Instead, He ﷻ is more pleased with those who repeatedly ask Him of their needs, and He even dislikes not being asked!

Why do people not love the only One Who brings them good deeds (by multiplying a believer's good deed by ten) and removing their bad deeds. He ﷻ answers invocations, removes misfortunes, forgives sins and rewards good deeds!

The perfection of love is manifested in the delight, joy and happiness of the self; and certainly these signs of perfect love are praiseworthy, if they lead to the greatest eternal delight, namely that of the Hereafter and its blessings!

Allah ﷻ said: **«Nay, you prefer the life of this world, although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.»**¹

The sorcerers said to Pharaoh, when they believed: **«So decree whatever you desire to decree, for you can only**

¹ Surat Al-A'la', Verses 16-17.

decree regarding this life of the world. Verily, we have believed in Our Lord, that He may forgive us our faults, and the magic to which you did compel us; and Allah is better (as regards reward, in comparison to your reward) and more lasting.”¹

Allah ﷻ created mankind and *jinn* so as to grant them this eternal delight in the world of the Hereafter; and the best ever blessing and delight of the Hereafter is that of looking at the Face of Allah ﷻ and listening directly to His Words, and being close to Him ﷻ.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ would lift the veil, and of all the things given to them nothing would be dearer to them than the sight of their Lord, the Mighty and the Glorious.”² And in another Hadith: “When He ﷻ appeared to them and they saw Him, they forgot about all the blessings which they were enjoying.”

The Prophet ﷺ said in one of his supplications: “I ask You for the pleasure to look at Your Generous Face, with the desire to meet You.”³

The second type of delight is a reprehensible one, which is opposite to the delight of the Hereafter. It is the delight of those who take idols as rivals to Allah; they love them and benefit from one another in this world, as they will try to

¹ Surat Ta-Ha, Verse 72-73.

² Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of Faith”, Hadith 297, At-Tirmidhi in the “Book of Paradise”, chapter 16, Ibn Maajah in the book, “The Introduction”, chapter 13.

³ Recorded by An-Nassai in the book, “*As-Sahw*”, chapter 62, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (5/ 191).

explain to their Lord, on the Day of Judgment: **“Our Lord! We benefited from one another, but now we have reached our appointed term which you did appoint for us”** He will say: **“The Fire is your dwelling place; you will dwell therein forever, except as Allah may will. Certainly, your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.”** Thus, **We do make the wrong-doers supporters of one another, because of that which they used to earn.**»¹

The delight of sinners, wrong-doers and transgressors is only here, on earth, yet it is but a gradual lead to their destruction; Allah ﷻ said: **“We shall gradually seize them with punishment in ways they perceive not; for I respite them; certainly my plan is strong.”**»²

Some scholars added to the interpretation of the above Verse that whenever the transgressors commit a sin, Allah ﷻ creates a blessing for them, **“until in the midst of their enjoyment in that which they were given, all of a sudden, We took them (in punishment), and they were plunged into destruction with deep regrets and sorrows. So, the root of the people who did wrong was cut off; all Praise and Thanks are Allah’s, the Lord of the ‘Alamin.”**»³

Allah ﷻ has said about people of such delight: **“Do they think that in wealth and children We extend to them, We are hastening to them with good things? No indeed, but they have no awareness.”**»⁴

¹ Surat Al-An’am, Verses 128-129

² Surat Al-A’raf, Verses 182-183.

³ Surat Al-An’am, Verses 44-45.

⁴ Surat Al-Mu’minun, Verses 55-56.

He ﷺ also said about them: **«So do not let their wealth and children impress you (O Muhammad ﷺ); in reality Allah's Plan is to punish them with these things in the life of this world, and that their souls shall depart (die) while they are disbelievers.»**¹

The third type of delight is one which does not succeed as a delight of the Hereafter nor generate any punishment; it is the one which was meant by the Prophet ﷺ, in the Hadith: "Everything with which a man amuses himself is vain, except for: his shooting with his bow, his training of his horse, and his playing with his wife; for they pertain to what is right."²

This love is not censured; it is one of the types of love that is praiseworthy, as well as love for the Prophet ﷺ. However, what we mean here is that love which occupies the heart of the one who loves; the one who devotes his/her thought and remembrance to his/her beloved one. Every Muslim has in his heart a love for Allah and His Messenger which is necessary for him/her to enter Islam; yet the degree of this love varies from one to another, and is known only to Allah ﷻ.

It is this love which reduces the pressure of the religious obligations; it makes the niggardly acts become generous ones; it puts bravery in the heart of the coward; it purifies the mind and tames the self; it lightens up the face and delights the heart.

¹ Surat At-Tawbah, Verse 55.

² Recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the book, "The Merits of *Jihad*", chapter 11, Ibn Maajah in the "Book of *Jihad*", chapter 19, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/ 144, 148).

Likewise, loving the Word of Allah ﷻ (the Qur'an) is a sign of having love of Allah. If one wants to see the degree of one's love for Allah, look at the way you love the Qur'an in your heart; your delight in listening to it, as compared to other people's delight in listening to music.

It is known that whoever loves a beloved, his/her words and speech become dearer to him/her than anything else.

'Uthman bin Affan ؓ said: "If our hearts were purified, they would never have enough of the Word of Allah."

One day, the Prophet ﷺ told Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ: "Recite the Qur'an to me." He replied: "Shall I recite it to you, even though it was revealed to you?" The Prophet ﷺ said: "I like to hear it from others." So he ؓ recited Surat An-Nisa' (The Women), till he reached the Verse (N^o 41): ﴿How (will it be) then when We bring from each nation a witness, and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people.﴾ Then the Prophet ﷺ told him: "Stop!" Whereupon he saw the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ overflowing with tears."¹

As for the love of one's spouse(s), there is no blame in this. It is a blessing that Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon His Servants; for He ﷻ said: **﴿Among His Signs is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection**

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in the book, "*Tafsir Surah An-Nisa*", chapter 6, in the book, "*The Merits of the Qur'an*", chapter 32, 35; Muslim in the book, "*The Travellers*", Hadith 247, 248; Abu Dawud in the "*Book of Knowledge*", chapter 13.

and mercy, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect.)¹

He ﷺ has made women as a resting place for a man's heart, and established sincere love and affection between them, which is love with mercy.

Allah ﷻ has said, after mentioning what is lawful for men of women and what is not: **‘Allah wishes to make clear (what is lawful and what is unlawful) to you, and to show you the ways of those before you, and accept your repentance; for Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise. Allah wishes to accept your repentance, but those who follow their lusts, wish that you (believers) should deviate tremendously away (from the right Path). Allah wishes to lighten the burden for you, for man was created weak (i.e. cannot be patient to leave sexual intercourse with women))’²**

Jabir bin Abdullah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ saw a woman, and so he approached his wife, Zaynab, to fulfil his desire with her. He then went to his Companions and told them: ‘A woman advances and returns in the shape of a devil, so when one of you sees a woman, he should approach his wife, for that would repel whatever he felt in his heart.’³

There are many lessons to be learned from this Hadith: first,

¹ Surat Ar-Rum, Verse 21.

² Surat An-Nisa', Verse 26-28.

³ Recorded by Muslim in the “Book of Marriage”, Hadith 9, Abu Dawud in the “Book of Marriage”, chapter 43, At-Tirmidhi in the book, “*Ar-Rada'*”, chapter 9, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 230).

- it is advised to distract oneself from something coveted with something of the same nature
- it is commanded to heal the passion for any woman with the best cure, and that is to fulfil one's sexual desire with the wife. The Prophet ﷺ said that there is nothing better for two lovers than marriage¹. Marrying a beloved woman is the best cure for passion, which Allah ﷻ made legal for mankind. This cure was used by Prophet Dawud عليه السلام; for he married a woman whom he loved very much.

As for the story of Zaynab, daughter of Jahsh: her husband Zayd ؓ had decided to divorce her, although she did not agree. He ؓ consulted the Prophet ﷺ who told him to keep her. However the Prophet ﷺ learnt that they inevitably were going to divorce, and kept secret the plan that he was going to marry her once she had become separated from Zayd, because he ﷺ was worried that people might say: "The Prophet ﷺ married the wife of his son." (As he ﷺ had adopted Zayd as a son before the start of his Mission as a Prophet). Allah ﷻ wanted to legislate a general legislation for the benefits of His Servants; so when Zayd ؓ divorced Zaynab and her 'Iddah² period expired, Allah ﷻ sent the Prophet ﷺ to propose to her. Zayd ؓ stood with his back to the door. The Prophet called her from behind the door: "O Zaynab, the Messenger of Allah is proposing to you." She said: "I cannot decide until I ask Allah ﷻ (in prayer)." She performed a prayer, and Allah ﷻ took charge Himself and concluded their marriage contract above His Throne; with

¹ Recorded by Ibn Maajah in the "Book of Marriage", chapter 1.

² Legally prescribed period of waiting during which a woman may not remarry, after being widowed or divorced (to see whether she is pregnant or not from her divorced or dead husband).

the Revelation: **«So when Zayd had divorced her, We gave her to you in marriage.»**¹ Zaynab used to boast of her marriage to the Prophet ﷺ before the other wives of the Prophet, saying: “Your families conducted your marriage, but mine was conducted by Allah from above the seven heavens.”

There is no doubt that women were made dear to the Prophet ﷺ, as he said: “Perfume and women have been made dear to me, but my comfort has been provided by *Salah* (prayer).”²

The Prophet ﷺ interceded for a slave who was passionately in love with ex-wife, who had refused to return to him, once she was manumitted. Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ said: “Barira’s husband was a slave called Mughith; it is as if I am seeing him now, going behind Barira and weeping with his tears flowing down his beard. The Prophet then said to Barira: ‘Why don’t you return to him?’ She said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Do you order me to do so?’ He ﷺ said: ‘No, I am only interceding for him.’ She said: ‘I am not in need of him.’ The Prophet said to ‘Abbas: ‘O ‘Abbas! Are you not astonished by the love of Mughith for Barira, and the hatred of Barira for Mughith?’”³

The Prophet ﷺ used to equally divide his time with his wives, and used to say: “O Allah! this is my division, for what I own, so do not blame me for what I do not own.” (i.e. love). For Allah ﷻ said: **«You will never do perfect justice**

¹ Surat Al-Ahzab, Verse 37.

² Recorded by An-Nassai in the book, “*Ishrat An-Nisa*”, chapter 1, Ahmad in his *Musnad* (3/ 128, 199, 285).

³ Recorded by Al-Bukhari.

between your wives, even if it is your ardent desire﴾¹, which is regarding love and sexual intercourse.

A person who is in love should show patience and restraint, and should prefer to show love, fear and pleasure for Allah ﷻ; thus he/she would come under the category of those about whom Allah ﷻ said:

﴿But As for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires and lusts, verily Paradise will be his abode.﴾²

﴿But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two gardens.﴾³

We ask Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the Supreme Throne, to make us among those who prefer their love for Allah to that of their own desires, and seek therewith to attain His Pleasure, Alone.

¹ Surat An-Nisa', Verse 129.

² Surat An-Nazi'at, Verses 40-41.

³ Surat Ar-Rahman, Verse 46.